

**Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey
Reconnaissance Survey Final Report**

of

HALL COUNTY, NEBRASKA

Prepared for

Nebraska State Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office

Submitted by

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U.S. WEST RESEARCH, INC.

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I

Introduction

Throughout most of Nebraska's history, historic preservation was the province of dedicated individuals and organizations working alone in their local communities. Since the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, however, the Governor of each state has been required to appoint a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) to oversee preservation efforts mandated by the 1966 Act. In Nebraska, the Director of the Nebraska State Historical Society (NSHS) serves as SHPO. The staff of the NSHS' Historic Preservation Division forms the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO).

The NeSHPO administers a wide range of preservation programs. The duties of the NeSHPO relating to programs called for by the National Historic Preservation Act include:

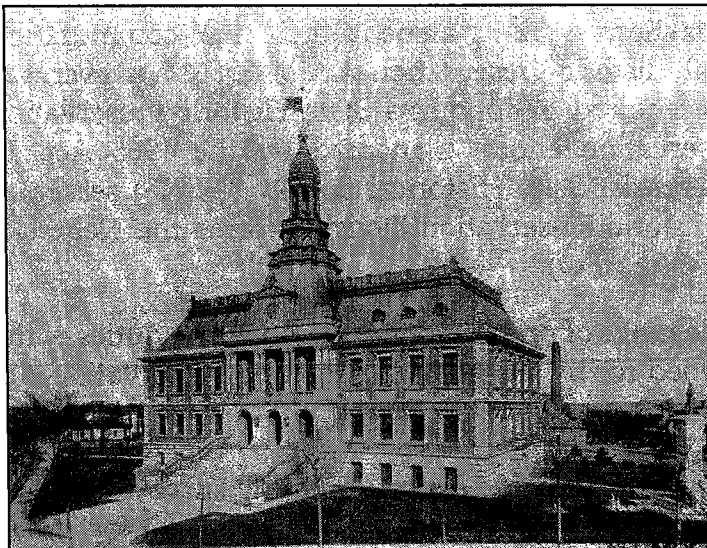
- Conducting and maintaining a statewide historic building survey;
- Administering the National Register of Historic Places program;
- Assisting local governments in the development of local historic preservation programs and certification of qualifying governments;
- Administering a federal tax incentives program for the preservation of historic buildings;
- Assisting Federal agencies in their responsibility to identify and protect historic properties that may be affected by their projects and;
- Providing preservation education, training and technical assistance to individuals and groups as well as local, state and federal government agencies.

What follows is a brief description of NeSHPO programs. Though described separately, it is important to remember that the programs often act in concert, and should be considered elements of the NeSHPO mission; as well as a part of the mission of the Nebraska State Historical Society.

NEBRASKA HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY

The Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (or NeHBS) was begun in 1974. The survey is conducted on a county-by-county basis, and currently includes over 60,000 properties that reflect the rich architectural and historic heritage of Nebraska. The survey is conducted by researchers who drive every rural and urban public road in a county and record each property that meet certain historic requirements. Surveyors

never enter private property without permission. In addition to this fieldwork, surveyors research the history of the area in order to better understand their subject. The NeHBS often includes thematic subjects that may be unique to a certain county, such as an historic highway or type of industry.



Hall County Courthouse,
Grand Island, Nebraska,
1917 (SMPP)

The purpose of the NeHBS is to help local preservation advocates, land-use planners, economic development coordinators and tourism promoters understand the wealth of historic properties in their community. Properties included in the survey have no use-restrictions placed on them, nor does the survey require any level of maintenance or accessibility by property owners. Rather, the survey provides a foundation for identifying properties that may be worthy of preservation, promotion, recognition and protection within a community.

This publication is the final report for the NeHBS investigation of Hall County. It provides a basis for preservation and planning in Hall County at all levels of government and for individual groups or citizens. Generally, this report includes properties that convey a sense of **architectural** significance. When possible and known, the report also describes properties that have **historical** significance. Although every effort has been made to be accurate and thorough, mistakes and omissions may occasionally occur. Additionally, as this project is in part federally funded, the NeSHPO must use federal guidelines when evaluating and identifying historic properties. In short, this publication is not an end in itself, but a beginning for public planners and individuals who value their community's history.

For more information call the NeHBS Program Associate at 402/471-4788 or the NeHBS Coordinator at 402/471-4773.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

One of the tasks of the NeHBS is to help identify properties that may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is our Nation's official list of significant historic properties. Created by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register includes buildings, structures, districts, objects, and sites that are significant in our history or prehistory. These properties may reflect a historically significant pattern, event, person, architectural style or archeological site. National Register sites may be significant at the local, state, or national level.



Andrew M. Hargis House, constructed 1898, Grand Island, taken circa 1900. Potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (SMPP)

Properties need not be as "historic" as Mt. Vernon or architecturally spectacular as the Nebraska State Capitol to be listed on the National Register. Historic properties that retain their physical integrity and convey important local significance may also be listed.

It is important to note what listing a property on the National Register means or, perhaps more importantly, what it does not mean. The National Register **DOES NOT:**

- Restrict a private property owner's ability to alter, manage, or dispose of a property;
- Require that properties be maintained, repaired or restored;
- Invoke special zoning or local landmark designation;
- Allow the listing of individual private property over an owner's objection; or historic districts over a majority of property owner's objection;
- Require public access to private property.

Listing a property on the National Register **DOES:**

- Provide prestigious recognition to significant properties;
- Encourage the preservation of historic properties;
- Provide information about historic properties for local and statewide planning purposes;
- Help promote community development, tourism, and economic development;
- Require owner consent to list private property;
- Provide basic eligibility for financial incentives, if available.

For more information call the National Register Coordinator at 402/471-4788.

CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The primary goal of the NeSHPO is to translate the federal preservation program, as embodied by the National Historic Preservation Act, to the local level. One of the most effective and important tools for this purpose is the Certified Local Government, or CLG, program. A CLG is a local government, either a county or municipality, that has adopted preservation as a priority. To become a CLG, a local government must:

- Establish a preservation ordinance that includes protection for historic properties at a level the community decides is appropriate;
- Create a commission to oversee the preservation ordinance and the CLG program;
- Promote preservation education and outreach;
- Conduct and maintain some level of historic building survey;
- Establish a mechanism to locally landmark properties.

There are a number of advantages to achieving CLG status:

- A CLG is eligible to receive matching funds from the NeSHPO that are unavailable to non-CLGs;
- Contributing buildings within locally landmarked historic districts may be eligible for preservation tax incentives (see below) without being listed on the National Register of Historic Places;
- CLGs have an additional tool when considering planning, zoning, and land use issues through their landmarking and survey programs.
- CLGs have the ability to monitor and preserve structures that reflect the community's heritage;
- Finally, but not least, a CLG, through its ordinance and commission, has a built-in mechanism to promote pride in and understanding of a community's history.

Certification of a local government for CLG status comes from the NeSHPO and the National Park Service. A community considering CLG status, however, has broad flexibility within the parameters discussed above. The emphasis of the CLG program is local management of historic properties with technical and economic assistance from the NeSHPO.

For more information call the CLG coordinator at 402/471-4767.

PRESERVATION TAX INCENTIVES

Since 1976 the Internal Revenue Code has contained provisions offering tax credits for the certified rehabilitation of income-producing historic properties. Historic properties are defined as those listed on the National Register of Historic Places; or as buildings that contribute to the significance of a National Register or locally landmarked (by a CLG, see above) historic district. An income producing property may be a rental residential, office, commercial or industrial property.

A certified rehabilitation is, generally, one that conforms to the "Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings". The Standards are a common sense approach to the adaptive re-use of historic buildings. It is important to remember that this program promotes the rehabilitation of historic properties so that they may be used to the benefit and enjoyment of a community into the 21st century. The program is not necessarily intended to reconstruct or restore historic buildings to exact, as-built specifications.

The tax incentive program in Nebraska has been responsible for:

- The re-investment of millions of dollars towards the preservation of historic buildings;
- The establishment of thousands of low and moderate income housing units as well as upper-end units;
- The adaptive re-use of previously under-utilized or un-utilized historic properties in older downtown commercial areas;
- Helping broaden the tax base;
- Giving real estate developers and city planners a tool to consider projects in older, historic neighborhoods.

Certification of the historic nature of the income-producing property (usually listing the property on the National Register) and certification of the historic rehabilitation are made by both the NeSHPO and the National Park Service. We strongly urge contacting the NeSHPO and a professional tax advisor, legal counsel or appropriate local IRS office **before** initiating any activity for a project that anticipates the use of preservation tax incentives.

For more information call the Review and Preservation Services Program Associate at 402/471-4740.

FEDERAL PROJECT REVIEW

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that federal agencies take into account the effect of their undertakings on historic properties; seek ways to avoid or reduce adverse effects their projects may have on historic properties; and afford the Federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation an opportunity to comment on the project and its effects. The regulations that govern the "Section 106" process, as it is known, also require that the federal agency consult with the NeSHPO to: identify historic properties in the project area; assess the effects a project may have; and to seek ways to avoid or reduce adverse effects if any could occur within a project area.

For example, if the Federal Highways Administration, through the Nebraska Department of Roads, contemplates construction of a new highway, they must contact the NeSHPO for assistance in determining whether any sites or structures listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register exist in the project area. Notice that a property need not actually be listed on the Register, only be eligible. This process is to take place early enough in the planning process to allow for alternatives should historic properties be located in the project area: i.e.-in the example above, the modification of a new highway's right-of-way could avoid an archeological site or historic barn.



Road Crew in early Hall County, Nebraska (SMPP)

It is important to note that public participation in this process is vital. The Section 106 process requires the federal agency to seek the views of the public and interested parties if adverse effects to historic properties are discovered through consultation with the NeSHPO. The NeSHPO examines information provided by the federal agency, the NeHBS, and the National Register, but often the most valuable information comes from comments provided by the public. Section 106 was included in the National Historic Preservation Act to protect locally significant historic properties from unwitting federal action: it is truly a law that gives the public a voice in an often unsympathetic bureaucratic system.

For more information about Section 106 review, call the NeSHPO at 402/471-4787.

PUBLIC OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

The primary function of the NeSHPO is to assist communities in preserving significant buildings, sites, objects, and structures that convey a sense of community history. The most powerful tool available to the NeSHPO in this regard is public education. For this reason, NeSHPO staff spends considerable time conducting public meetings and workshops and disseminating information to the public. The NeSHPO also works with teachers to help design and implement classroom strategies that teach students the value of their local history and heritage.

Our goal is to assist local individuals, groups and governments understand, promote and preserve historic properties. The NeSHPO advocates not only the self-evident aesthetic advantages of historic preservation, but also the potential for preservation to help promote economic development, community planning, tourism, environmental sensitivity, and land-use planning.

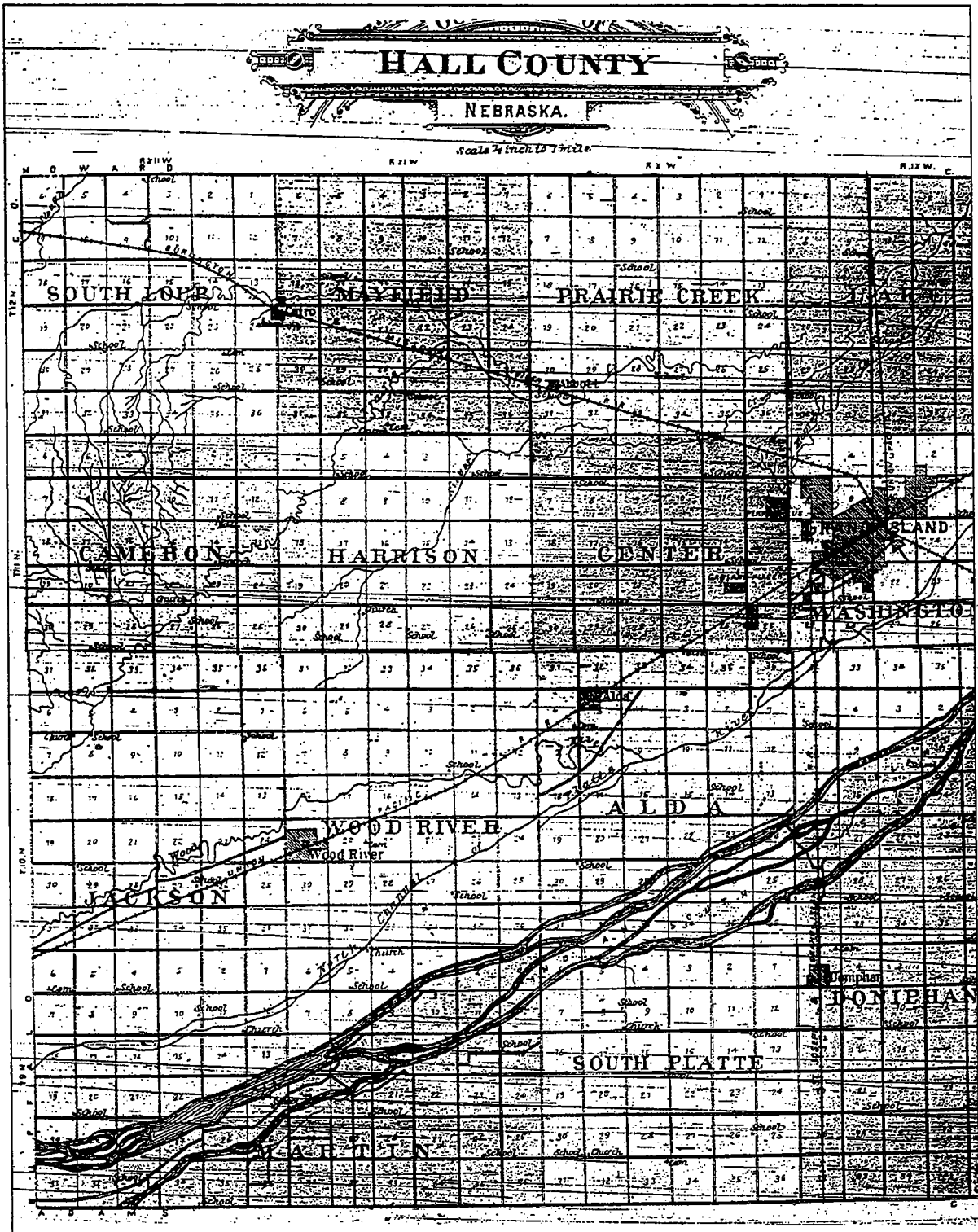
The short descriptions included in this introduction to the Hall County final report are meant to orient the reader to the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey program within the larger mission of the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office. As all NeSHPO programs spring from a common source, the National Historic Preservation Act, they work best when they work together, either in whole or in part. For the programs to work at all, they require the interest and participation of the people they are meant to serve.

For more information about the NeSHPO or the programs described above, please call 402/471-4787.

METHODOLOGY AND HISTORIC INTEGRITY

The Nebraska Historic Building Survey (NeHBS) of Hall County was conducted between March 1995 and July 1995. Research design, field survey, historic research, and final product production were conducted by Principal Investigator Barbara M. Kooiman, and Elizabeth A. Butterfield, Architectural Historians/Historians, in association with the Nebraska State Historical Society.

U.S. West Research, Inc. (USWR) commenced the contract entitled, *Reconnaissance Survey and Thematic Survey of Hall County, Nebraska* by conducting prefield research at the Nebraska State Historical Society. The research team gathered historical information regarding Hall County, specific communities in the county, and two areas of thematic study related to the Lincoln Highway and the Resettlement Administration



Map of Hall County, 1904

Subsistence Farmstead program. Furthermore, USWR devised a reconnaissance survey field form and a working bibliography. Both documents were submitted to staff members of the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office for review and acceptance.

Between March and May 1995, USWR surveyed every public road in Hall County (100% coverage). Before the onset of the field work, the survey team notified local officials regarding the scope of the project. The survey team refrained from trespassing on either private roads or driveways. Therefore, when properties were too far from the road to photograph or were obscured by foliage, they were not inventoried. The field crew systematically inventoried the built environment in the project area and recorded those properties that represented important historical and architectural developments of the county, based on established physical criteria.

In relation to the general architectural survey, USWR also conducted a more intensive survey of the selected themes: the Lincoln Highway and the Resettlement Administration Subsistence Farmstead Program, previously identified by the NeSHPO. Regarding properties associated with these thematic studies, USWR and the NeSHPO requested information at a public meeting, made many telephone calls, and placed an announcement in the local paper.¹ USWR primarily surveyed buildings and structures associated with the thematic areas that were clearly identified by either local citizens or institutions.

USWR surveyed all properties constructed at least fifty years ago (pre-1945). USWR collaborated with the NeSHPO staff to set criteria in relation to historic integrity. First, properties were surveyed if they retained original materials, location, and form. Properties were not surveyed if they displayed modern siding (i.e. stucco, permastone, aluminum, vinyl, asbestos, asphalt), blocked-in and/or downsized windows and doors, modern additions, closed-in porches, or metal porch railings. Second, for abandoned buildings, USWR only inventoried properties which appeared to have been constructed before 1900. Abandoned buildings were judged based upon integrity of location, foundation, window sashes, wall material, and roof pitch. Third, if the primary building of a property—for example the house or barn on a farmstead—was not historic, USWR only surveyed the outbuildings if they retained exceptional integrity and displayed unusual features, pristine form, and original materials.

Each property was photographed (35mm, black and white) at least twice at 45-degree angles to show the facade and two other elevations from the right-of-way.

1. In the spring of 1995, U.S. West Research attended one public meeting directly related to the survey project to inform local citizens of the scope of the work, and also to gather first-hand information regarding specific sites and themes.

Each surveyed property was plotted on the appropriate corresponding survey map. On each field form, the surveyors identified the location, property type, materials, style, and massing (i.e., shape, size, height, roof type.). USWR also confirmed previously surveyed buildings and rephotographed them if they were altered, and entered any information on the field survey cards and in the NeHBS database. In addition to the required reconnaissance survey standards, the thematic survey also included completing the appropriate NeHBS form, noting significant details of each property surveyed, shooting 35mm color slides, and sketch site plans. U.S. West Research, Inc. used the historic context and property types, developed by the NeSHPO, to classify each inventoried property.

The research team conducted historical background research in a number of ways, and used a variety of repositories. During the project's field survey phase, the NeSHPO staff collected secondary sources, historic photographs, as well as newspaper clippings, primary sources, and brochures from vertical files located at the Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, Grand Island, Nebraska. Researchers also gathered secondary sources from the Edith Abbott Public Library, Grand Island, Nebraska. USWR staff conducted extensive research at the Nebraska State Historical Society Archives and the University of Nebraska facilities, including the C.Y. Thompson Library and Love Library. In an attempt to gather primary sources, USWR staff contacted people knowledgeable about the general and specific history of the county.

USWR compiled all of the fieldwork information, as well as the historical material and entered the appropriate facts into the NeHBS database. This database was used to prepare tables and statistical data for this final report. The report includes information about federal and state procedures regarding historic properties; historical background of the state of Nebraska, Hall County, and communities in the county; historic contexts identified in the county; thematic surveys of the Lincoln Highway and the Resettlement Administration Subsistence Farmstead activities in the county; recommendations; references; and an architectural glossary. Additional products submitted to the Nebraska State Historical Society include contact sheets and photographic negatives, maps, site plans, and research files.

SURVEY RESULTS

The Nebraska Historic Building Survey of Hall County began in March 1995. The contract, undertaken in September 1994 and finished in July 1995, resulted in a comprehensive survey of 1,032 properties, including resurvey of 283 properties previously inventoried. USWR inventoried a total of 150 properties in the rural area; 12 in Alda; 53 in Cairo; 48 in Doniphan; 704 in Grand Island, and 65 in Wood River. In regards to the thematic survey, 9 properties associated with the Lincoln Highway and 8 properties related to the Resettlement Administration Rehabilitation Farmstead Program were identified. Of the 1,032 total properties surveyed in the county, 13 are

currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places and another 45 were identified by USWR as eligible for the Register.

NUMERICAL SUMMARY OF THE HALL COUNTY RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY

Site# / Name Community	Total Properties	Contributing Buildings	Contributing Sites	Contributing Structures	Contributing Objects
HL00 Rural	108 (42)	197 (22)	11 (0)	13 (41)	0 (1)
HL02 Alda	8 (4)	15 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
HL03 Cairo	32 (21)	49 (7)	0 (0)	1 (0)	0 (0)
HL05 Doniphan	35 (13)	50 (5)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
HL06 Grand Island	536 (168)	825 (91)	4 (0)	16 (1)	1 (0)
HL08 Wood River	30 (35)	40 (21)	0 (0)	5 (0)	0 (0)

SUMMARY TABLE

	Total Properties	Contributing Buildings	Contributing Sites	Contributing Structures	Contributing Objects
Total of 1994/ 1995 Survey	749	1176	15	35	1
Total of Previous Survey	283	148	0	42	1
Total Surveyed	1032	1324	15	77	2

Numbers in parentheses indicate properties previously surveyed.

DEFINITIONS:²

Property – Building(s), site(s), structure(s), and/or object(s) located within a defined boundary of land. All surveyed properties were at least fifty years old and architecturally intact.

Building – A building, such as a house, barn, church, hotel, or similar construction, is created principally to shelter any form of human activity.

Site – A site is the location of a significant event, a prehistoric or historic occupation or activity, or a building or structure, whether standing, ruined, or vanished, where the location itself possesses historic cultural, or archeological value regardless of the value of any existing structure.

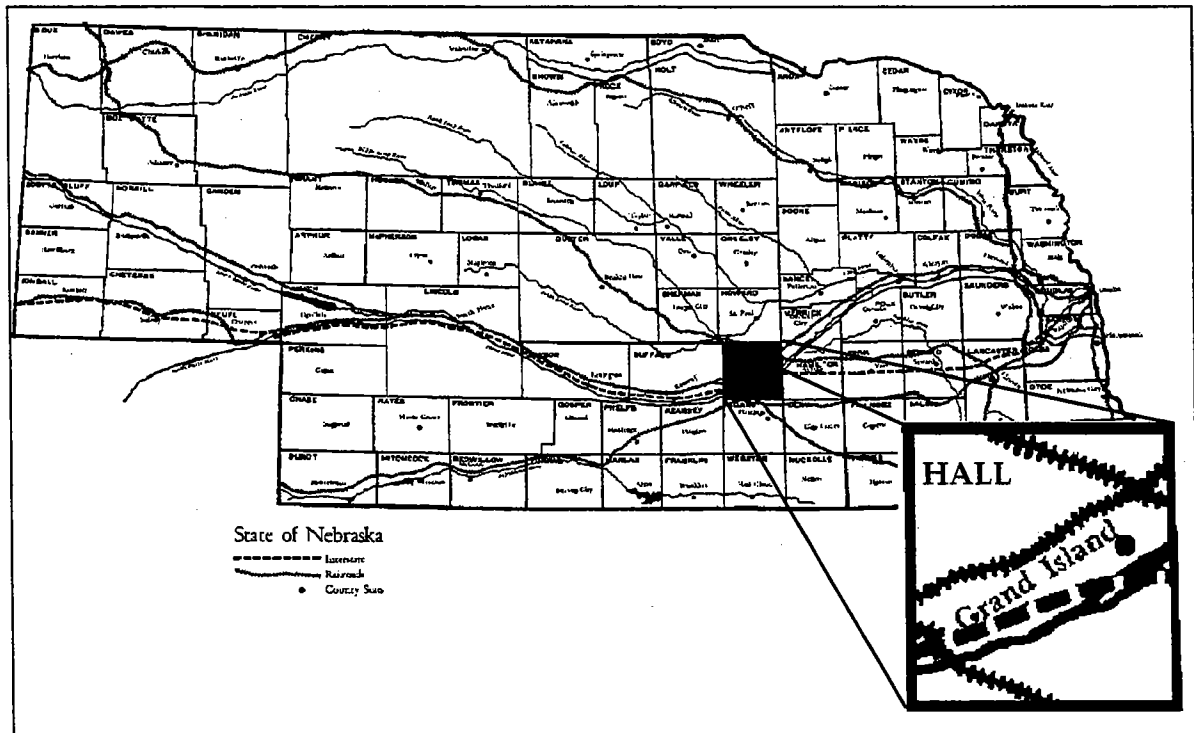
Structure – The term 'structure' is used to distinguish from buildings those functional constructions made usually for purposes other than creating human shelter.

Object – The term "object" is used to distinguish from buildings and structures those constructions that are primarily artistic in nature or are relatively small in scale and simply construct.

2. The following definitions have been taken verbatim from the National Register Branch, Interagency Resources Division, National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991).

II

Historic Overview of Hall County



State of Nebraska with Hall County Highlighted

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Hall County, located in the southeast central portion of Nebraska, encompasses approximately 552 square miles. This square-shaped county is bordered by Buffalo County to the west, Howard County to the north, Merrick and Hamilton counties to the east, and Adams County to the south. The Platte River flows from southwest to northeast through the southeast corner of Hall County. Topographic regions in the county include the Platte Valley Lowland and Loess Plains Region.³

3. James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 8.

Soil types indigenous to Hall County are Alluvial in the Platte Valley and Holdrege-Hall in the remaining regions of the county. The Holdrege-Hall type designates an area suitable for agriculture, including the production of corn, winter wheat, and alfalfa.⁴

The climate in Hall County fluctuates from hot summers to cold winters. The average high temperature in July is approximately 88.8 degrees Fahrenheit, while the average high temperature in January is approximately 31.2 degrees Fahrenheit, a difference of 57.6 degrees. On a yearly basis, Hall County receives an average of 23.2 inches. The months between April and July receive the greatest amount of precipitation.⁵

NATIVE AMERICAN INHABITANTS

Prior to Euro-American settlement of the state of Nebraska, a variety of tribes occupied the region. The Omaha, Otoe, Missouri, and Ponca Indians resided in permanent communities in the wooded areas of eastern and northeastern Nebraska. The Pawnee occupied land that extended from the Niobrara River south through the Sand Hills to the Republican River near the Kansas border. Three Native American tribes traversed western Nebraska. The Dakota resided north of the Platte River and Arapaho and Cheyenne Indians roamed the southwest corner of the state and panhandle.⁶

The area that became Hall County was occupied by the Pawnee Indians, who during different seasons either roamed the countryside hunting or resided in villages and planted crops. In the mid-1800s, four Pawnee tribes, the Grand, Wolf, Republican, and Tapage Pawnee, ceded their Nebraska lands in a series of treaties with the United States government. Many Pawnee were transplanted to reservation lands in the current state of Oklahoma.⁷

4. James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 9-10.

5. McKinley Conway and Linda L. Liston, ed., *The Weather Handbook* (Norcross, GA: Conway Data, Inc., 1990), 191.

6. James A. Beattie, ed., *School History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 18-20.

7. James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 22; Addison E. Sheldon, *Nebraska: The Land and the People* (New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1931), 93, 95-107; James A. Beattie, ed., *School History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 23.

BRIEF HISTORY OF NEBRASKA

Foreign expeditions into the area probably occurred as early as 1541 when Francisco Vasquez de Coronado and his party travelled as far north as the present-day state line between Nebraska and Kansas. Approximately two hundred years later, in 1739, the Nebraska countryside was explored by Pierre and Paul Mallett and their six person French team. In 1803, the region fell under the ownership of the United States government following the Louisiana Purchase.⁸ After the transaction, an American expedition headed by William Clark and Meriwether Lewis received authority to explore and promote trade in this newly acquired region. By the summer of 1804, Lewis and Clark entered the present-day boundaries of Nebraska. During the first decades of the 1800s, Nebraska was traversed by explorers and traders searching for both viable routes westward and lucrative trade relationships.⁹

The Oregon Trail, which passed through Nebraska and followed the Platte River, served as one of the country's most widely used routes of transportation westward. The years 1832 to 1860 marked the highest use of the route, which accommodated people travelling from East to West. The short-lived Pony Express also passed through Nebraska along this corridor. In the fall of 1860, the first telegraph line was erected between St. Joseph, Missouri and Fort Kearny, Nebraska. It improved communication and contributed to the discontinuation of the Pony Express service.¹⁰

In 1854, the Kansas-Nebraska Bill created the Nebraska Territory and promoted its settlement. Initial settlement occurred in the eastern part of the state along the banks of the Missouri River. Early communities included Fort Lisa (Fort Calhoun) formed in 1812; Bellevue created in 1820; and Fort Kearny, established in 1847. By 1854, when Omaha City was plotted, approximately eight counties existed in Nebraska Territory. In 1867, Nebraska entered the Union as the thirty-seventh state.¹¹

8. The Louisiana Purchase included the states of Louisiana, Missouri, Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska, Montana, South Dakota, and North Dakota, as well as portions of Minnesota, Colorado, and Wyoming.

9. James A. Beattie, ed., *School History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 30-54, 100-102.

10. James A. Beattie, ed., *School History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 56-64, 71, 75-76.

11. James A. Beattie, ed., *School History of Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 109-113, 166; James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 155.

After the Civil War, a large influx of homesteaders entered Nebraska. Between 1860 and 1870 the population rose from 28,841 to 122,993. The increase in settlement resulted from the enactment of the 1862 Homestead Act. Passage of the Homestead Act resulted in heightened efforts by government and the railroads to entice new residents to particular areas. The railroads also expanded service in these areas which led to the platting of new communities along the tracks. In 1880 the population was 452,402 and by 1890 rose to 1,058,910.¹²

Settlement in the state moved from east to west and mirrored the expansion of the railroad. In 1875, organized counties stretched from the eastern one-quarter to the southern one-quarter of the state, and into the southern one-half of the panhandle. Just ten years later, the entire state of Nebraska was divided into counties. During these years, the economic livelihood of the state was based upon agriculture, which depended upon weather, crop prices, and the availability of markets and transportation.¹³

At the turn of the century, even with the shift of the state's population from rural areas to villages, towns, and even cities, Nebraska still relied heavily on agricultural production. Approximately 67% of urban manufacturing companies produced goods related to agriculture. Hybridization of primary crops, the introduction of alfalfa and expanded planting of sugar beets in the Platte River Valley upgraded farming in Nebraska. The size and the value of farms rose from 113,608 farms, worth a little more than one-half billion dollars in 1890 to 129,678 farms, worth over two billion dollars in 1910. During this time, the 1904 Kinkaid Act enlarged the size of homesteads in thirty-seven northwest Nebraska counties. It guaranteed ample sized homesteads for agriculture and livestock production. Population statistics for the first two decades of the twentieth century indicate that settlement and crop output in this region increased significantly.¹⁴

High demand and prices for food during World War I resulted in prosperous times for Nebraska. However, this situation did not last long and in the 1920s the state experienced harbingers of the Great Depression. Farmers, who had taken mortgages out to purchase additional land during peak crop prices, found foreign demand decreasing and as a result had difficulty paying off their loans. Declining farm income had a ripple effect on the commercial and manufacturing areas in the state.

12. James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 154-157, 173.

13. James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 155-156, 174-175.

14. James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 249-252, 257-259.

Solutions for this problem arose in the mid to late 1930s and early 1940s. New Deal programs designed by Franklin D. Roosevelt's administration provided federal funds to rural and urban sectors of Nebraska. Also, in 1941, the United States entered World War II and Nebraska's agricultural production answered the call to feed troops abroad and civilians at home.¹⁵

Following World War II, economic conditions throughout the state improved with higher wages and business diversification. Between 1940 and 1960, while the farm population decreased 38%, the urban population rose 50%. As a result of improved mechanization, farmers in the state were able to cultivate more acres with less labor. Thus, the number of farms declined as the acreage of each farm grew. In 1935, 133,616 farms averaged 348.9 acres, whereas in 1965 82,000 farms averaged 587 acres. Changing conditions in the state promoted a stable financial base.¹⁶

15. James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 268-270, 286-288, 296-306.

16. James C. Olson, *History of Nebraska* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), 330-332.

HALL COUNTY HISTORY

In 1803, the region known today as Hall County was acquired by the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase. However, it was not permanently settled until 1857 when a group from Davenport, Iowa entered the area. This settlement occurred three years after Congress designated Nebraska a territory. An act dated November 4, 1858, formed Hall County, which previously had been part of Platte County. It included land within Hall County's current boundaries stretching north from the Platte River, as well as the majority of current-day Howard County. An 1864 piece of legislation required the redrawing of Hall County's boundaries, however, approximately one year later the act was abrogated. An 1868 election designated Grand Island as the Hall County seat. A third act, dated March 1, 1871, defined Hall County with additional land south of the Platte River and reapportioned land in present-day Howard County.¹⁷

Some controversy exists about the namesake of Hall County. Some sources suggest that the county was named after Augustus Hall, who served as a chief justice of Nebraska Territory and as an Iowa congressperson. Other sources claim that the title was taken from the last name of a man who was an early pioneer and business person in the area.¹⁸

Since Hall County was located along the Oregon/California Trail, some of the earliest people to traverse the county included settlers heading west to make homes in states such as Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, California, and Oregon, as well as Pike's Peakers intent on reaching Colorado.¹⁹ Today, the trail is designated by three stone markers (HL06-705, HL00-149, HL00-159) visible from the right-of-way and one located on the grounds of the Platte Valley Academy.

During the first decade after settlement, Hall County's population expanded gradually. In 1869, with a population of 1,734, property improvements in the county were

17. Merrill J. Mattes, *The Great Platte River Road: The Covered Wagon Mainline Via Fort Kearny to Fort Laramie* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), 17; Robert N. Manley, *The Town Builders* (Grand Island, Nebraska: The Prairie Pioneer Press, 1985), 70; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 166; *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 27.

18. Elton Perkey, *Perkey's Nebraska Place-Names* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1982), 90; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 10.

19. A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 13.

estimated at \$540,014.00. Hall County's sluggish development can most likely be attributed to a grasshopper infestation which plagued the county from about 1865 to 1873. However, by 1879, the county's census figure increased by 4,641 people and the property values rose by \$1,275,266.60.²⁰ This increase in settlement was closely affiliated with the railroad. As in many Nebraska counties, communities in Hall County grew along the railroad tracks and the banks of the Platte River.

Between 1866 and 1890, railroad activity in the county flourished and resulted in the development of new communities. The Union Pacific, working within the guidelines of federal laws, acquired property rights to land abutting its tracks. Towns along the tracks were erected at intervals of approximately eight miles to accommodate farmers. After platting new towns, the railroads utilized the proceeds from sales of lots and blocks to entice settlers to move to railroad towns, survey new communities, contribute to commercial centers, and improve roads. Since the Union Pacific was the first railroad to lay tracks across Hall County, it was responsible for the platting of three communities. Grand Island, surveyed in 1866, was selected as a railroad division point in central Nebraska. The Union Pacific also planned Alda and Wood River. Other railroad branches eventually extended from the division point to Ord and Loup City and were joined with extensions of the Burlington Railroad. The community of Cairo was developed as a result of tracks laid through the northwest part of the region. In 1873, the St. Joseph and Grand Island Railroad incorporated and constructed tracks from Grand Island to Hastings.²¹ Although a private individual surveyed Doniphan, its formation was directly correlated to its track location halfway between Grand Island and Hastings.

Towns erected by railroad companies often display similar plans, with the railroad tracks and their facilities the focus for development. In one plan, when the railroad tracks bisected a community, a business center would emerge on both sides of the tracks. This is reflected in the layout and growth of Grand Island. This design often resulted in one prosperous commercial district and another dominated by industry and working class housing. In a second plan, known as a "T town," surveyors laid a community with two prominent thoroughfares. While one extended perpendicular to the tracks, the other stretched parallel. The intersection of these two streets often functioned as the commercial center. Alda, Wood River, and Cairo are examples of a "T town".²²

20. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 27; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 31.

21. Robert N. Manley, *The Town Builders* (Grand Island, Nebraska: The Prairie Pioneer Press, 1985) 42-43; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 316, 325.

22. Robert N. Manley, *The Town Builders* (Grand Island, Nebraska: The Prairie Pioneer Press, 1985) 66-67.

Hall County residents also relied on roads to haul their goods to commercial centers and railroad stops. One of the first acts by local officials to promote better roads occurred in the summer of 1899. In an effort to forge a viable route across the county, an allocation of \$1,400 was made by county board members to improve one section line. Several decades later, one of the most prominent transcontinental roads passed through Hall County. When travelling from east to west, the Lincoln Highway entered the upper third of the county's eastern border and exited the western border's southern third. In 1916, the first Seedling Mile was finished to the northeast of Grand Island. Seedling Miles were paved, short sections of road completed and coordinated with the National Lincoln Highway Association. Grand Island, Wood River, and Alda served as the three main communities located along the route in Hall County. In some places in the county, the route of the Lincoln Highway (later renamed Highway 30) route changed at least four times between 1913 and 1933. Finally, the route was realigned to parallel the Union Pacific tracks along the north side to shorten the route and eliminate a number of crossings.²³

Easy access to transportation for taking crops to market helped make Hall County a successful agricultural region. In 1910, approximately 1,627 farmsteads, averaging almost 200 acres were operating in the county. This industry utilized 95 percent of the land in the county. The agricultural system relied on profits from the production of wheat, corn, oats, and alfalfa. By the end of the next decade, however, Hall County began to feel the ramifications of the Great Depression. In an effort to voice their dissatisfaction with economic conditions, Hall County residents cast 6,266 votes for Franklin D. Roosevelt and 3,743 votes for President Herbert Hoover during the 1932 presidential election. Hall County's position mirrored the rest of the country and Roosevelt became president. Several years later, residents of Hall County benefitted directly from one of Roosevelt's New Deal programs. In 1935 Hall County participated in a Rural Rehabilitation Program, a government project to establish displaced farm families on subsistence farmsteads. In Hall County, a project consisting of ten units was established in 1935 southeast of Grand Island.(HL06-691, A-H) Roosevelt's administration also aided in providing electricity to many rural residents of Hall County through the Rural Electrification Administration.²⁴

23. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 37; *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway* Reprinted in Facsimile from the 1924 Edition, (Tucson, AZ: The Patrice Press, 1993), 15, 386-387.

24. A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 220, 223; Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935) 7; Doniver A. Lund, *The Home Builder, 1882-1982: The Centennial History of the Equitable Building and Loan Association of Grand Island* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Woodruff Printing Company, 1982), 51, 64.

Economic difficulties experienced in Hall County during the Depression were alleviated when the United States entered World War II. In 1942, the airfield near Grand Island was activated as an air base under the direction of the military. During that same year, the Cornhusker Ordnance Plant (HL00-008) was constructed four miles west of Grand Island on twenty square miles of land. The plant, managed by the Quaker Oats Company, employed 4,000 people during maximum production. By the end of the war, it had assembled 2.25 million bombs and five million 105 mm shells, as well as other types of ammunition. Between 1945 and 1950, the installation was inactive until it was called to produce rockets for the Korean War. The plant was again placed on stand-by from 1955 to 1965. During this time, 12,800 acres around the facility were leased to area farmers for farm use. In 1965, the reactivated plant produced ammunition for the Vietnam War. During this phase, the plant employed 5,169 people. The reduction of the United States military activity in Vietnam in the 1970s warranted the end of ammunition production in 1973.²⁵

Following World War II, population in the county steadily increased: between 1940 and 1960 from 27,523 to 35,757. In 1970 the county's population was 42,851. Twenty years later, in 1990, the population in Hall County was reported at 48,925 people.²⁶

Hall County, which was not seriously settled until after the arrival of the Union Pacific Railroad, experienced a large increase in population between 1870 and 1890. Hall County's early settlement relative to the rest of the state was a result of its location near the Platte River, a highly travelled western route, and the railroads. Due to these transportation developments, agricultural producers and industries were able to successfully move their products to market which significantly benefitted the economic stability and continued population growth of Hall County.

TABLE OF POPULATION STATISTICS FOR HALL COUNTY

1870	1,057	1920	23,720	1970	42,851
1880	8,572	1930	27,117	1980	47,690
1890	16,513	1940	27,523	1990	48,925
1900	17,206	1950	32,186		
1910	20,361	1960	35,757		

25. Brad Jakubowski, "Cornhusker Army Ammunition Plant," Hall County 20th Century Memories Program 17 January 1985 Located at the Edith Abbott Public Library, Grand Island, Nebraska; Dennis Hetherington, "Grand Islanders Serve County With Pride," information taken from the *Grand Island Independent* 2 July 1970; Field Marketing Analysis Service, "Analysis of Grand Island, Nebraska, Housing Market as of 1 April 1968." (Federal Housing Administration, Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1968), 5.

26. Clerk of Legislature, comp., *Nebraska Blue Book 1992-1993* (Lincoln, Nebraska), 807.

HALL COUNTY VILLAGES, TOWNS, AND CITIES

ALDA

Alda is located in the south-central portion of Hall County. The village is approximately eight miles southwest of Grand Island's commercial district, and north of both the Union Pacific Railroad main line and the Platte River.

In 1858, a combined stage stop and post office known as Pawnee was built and operated by "Pap" Lamb. Pap's establishment existed south of present-day Alda. One year later, W. G. Eldridge became the first person to settle in the vicinity of Alda. When the Union Pacific constructed tracks in the area, Pawnee was a stop approximately six miles west of Grand Island. In 1873, the Union Pacific moved the community several miles west to accommodate farmers who did not want to travel far from home to transport goods to the railroad stop. The newly established community was known as Alda. Discrepancy exists regarding how Alda received its name. Three possibilities were that it was named for the first Euro-American child born in the settlement, that it was named after the wife of the president of Western Union, and that it was named after the wife of a Union Pacific section foreman. Shortly after the move, W.W. Mitchell opened a general store. Other early business ventures started in Alda included lumber yards, specialty stores, banks, a grain elevator, hotel and a creamery.²⁷

The layout of Alda is typical of many communities developed adjacent to railroad tracks. The east-west streets were laid parallel to the Union Pacific tracks and the north-south streets were set perpendicular, creating approximately 120 and 60 degree angles with the tracks. The commercial district in Alda is located on the north side of Highway 30, historically known as the Lincoln Highway. Two commercial buildings located along the thoroughfare contribute to the survey. Both buildings (HL02-001 & HL02-006) are of brick construction with ornamental brickwork and stand one story tall. The residential development of Alda stretches from the highway to the north for approximately three blocks and from east to west approximately seven blocks. The majority of residential houses surveyed in Alda display a variety of vernacular forms

27. "How Alda was Named," *Alda Advocate* 10 June 1910; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 142; "Alda Named for Railroader's Wife," *Grand Island Independent* 29 June 1957; Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...Central and North Central* (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1989), 131; Elton Perkey, *Perkey's Nebraska Place-Names* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1982), 90.

including a two-story cube (HL02-007), two one-story cubes (HL02-008 & HL02-012), two front gables (HL02-010 & HL02-005), and a side gable (HL02-011).²⁸

In the 1890s, Alda, along with the rest of the county, experienced economic hardship. However, by 1900 the depression had subsided and a grain elevator, grade school, barbershop, blacksmith shop, two churches and a stockyard were established in the community. By the second decade of the century an influx of travellers and businesses associated with the Lincoln Highway came to Alda. As early as 1912, Frank H. Denman erected the first motor vehicle garage in Alda. Four years later, in 1916, Alda was incorporated. During the 1920s, Alda boasted two garages, as well as two banks, a new school (HL02-009), express and telegraph stations, and telephone service. *The 1924 Complete Official Road Guide to the Lincoln Highway* noted that Frank Denman served as Lincoln Highway Local Consul and that the portion of highway running through Alda was graded dirt.²⁹

Although Alda's economy relied heavily on railroading and agriculture, in World War II it experienced a boost with the erection of an ordnance plant one and one-half miles north of town. Ammunition and manufacturing materials were transported to and from the plant on a spur track which extended from the Union Pacific's main line located at the south end of Alda. The influx of industrial workers in the area resulted in a housing shortage. Further, local officials reorganized the educational system, and enlarged fire fighting crews. The plant was also active during the Korean and Vietnam wars. In 1990, Alda reported a population of 540.³⁰

CAIRO

Cairo is located in the northwestern part of Hall County, approximately 12 miles northwest of Grand Island. It is located further from the Platte River than any other Hall County community. State Highway 11 runs through the center of Cairo and State Highway 2 abuts the railroad tracks along the northern edge of town.

In 1871, a northwestern section of land in Hall County was separated into five townships. One year later, H.H. Boring made the first claim in the vicinity of Cairo.

28. See appendix for definition of architectural terms.

29. A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 142; "Alda Named for Railroader's Wife," *Grand Island Independent* 29 June 1957; Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...Central and North Central* (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1989), 131; *A Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway* Reprinted in Facsimile from the 1924 Edition, (Tucson, Arizona: The Patrice Press, 1993), 388.

30. "Alda Named for Railroader's Wife," *Grand Island Independent* 29 June 1957; Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...Central and North Central* (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1989), 132; Rand McNally 1994 Road Atlas, (Rand McNally & Company, 1994), 124.

In 1875, the joining of the Grand Island and Wyoming Central Railroad and the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad resulted in an extension of tracks through Hall County west to Montana. In 1886, construction began in Grand Island and five water stops were planned on the route to Broken Bow. Based upon the railroad's third survey, the second water stop and freight center west of Grand Island was established on George Bussell's property. Due to the arid conditions at this stop, an engineer for the Lincoln Land Company, a subsidiary of the Burlington Railroad, referred to it as Cairo. Keeping in the spirit of the village's name, many of the streets were given middle eastern names, such as Mecca, Medina, Berber, Syria and Suez. Agent Willing, employed by the Lincoln Land Company, oversaw the sale of lots in Cairo. The railroad company also hired Dr. Caley M. Robinson of St. Paul, Nebraska to serve its employees and establish a home in Cairo. The tracks reached Cairo on May 29, 1886. In anticipation of the new town, the National Lumber Company established a lumber yard in the community. Early businesses included a grocery store, a furniture store, and a post office. On November 18, 1892, Cairo became incorporated.³¹



Main Street, Cairo, Nebraska, 1913 (SMPP)

31. Cairo Roots Society, *Cairo Community Heritage 1886-1986* (Dallas, Texas: The Curtis Media Corporation, 1986), 2, 5-6, 42-43; Jo Riedy, "The History of Cairo," 3 *Hall County History Paper* (October 1987), 2; Jo Riedy, "The Birth of Cairo--A Water Stop," *Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer*, Grand Island, Nebraska.

By the turn of the century, Grand Island businesses opened branch operations in Cairo. The community, which had a population of 224, housed a few stables, saloons, stores, lumber yards, restaurants, barbershops, a hotel, harness shop, shoe store, drug store, creamery, a blacksmith shop, brick factory, a flour mill, electric light company, telephone system, and ice house. The earliest grain sales operation in the area, owned by Louis Van Wasmer, was called a "shovelhouse." Later, Van Wasmer erected an elevator in Cairo. Additions to the business district a decade later included a cigar shop and pool hall, property office, machine shop, cement block distributor, horse importers and dealers, opera house, and pump and windmill manufacturer. In 1915, a tornado hit Cairo and demolished a number of buildings. Five years later, however, the commercial district recovered and provided a flour mill, general store, tractor manufacturer, automobile garage, meat market, restaurant, dentist and doctor. By 1920, Cairo boasted a population of 427.³²

In the 1930s, Cairo functioned as an alfalfa, dairy and hay market. Many of the agricultural-related products were shipped to larger commercial centers in the south and east. The community supported one blacksmith, lumber yard, elevator, hardware store, drug store, cafe, pool hall, and theater, two recreation parlors, three repair garages, general stores, filling station, and seven cream stations.³³

Commercial buildings surveyed in Cairo include a two-story brick building with concrete sills and corbelling (HL03-039), two one-story brick buildings (HL03-046 & HL03-047), a false front, frame constructed building (HL03-048), and two brick constructed gas stations (HL03-050 & HL03-053). Cairo also possesses a significant number of architecturally prominent residences including a Georgian Revival style house (HL03-004), a Dutch Colonial, concrete block house (HL03-031), and a two-and-one-half story, front gable house with Neo-Classical Revival style influence (HL03-007).

With the exception of a few slight fluctuations, Cairo has experienced steady growth since its inception. The greatest decline of population in the community occurred between 1930 and 1940 when it decreased by fourteen people. The most significant increase in population occurred between 1960 and 1970 when it jumped from 503 to 686. In 1990, Cairo reported a population of 733.³⁴

32. Cairo Roots Society, *Cairo Community Heritage 1886-1986* (Dallas, Texas: The Curtis Media Corporation, 1986), 2-3, 6-7, 33; Jo Riedy, "Cairo-The Bosom of the Great American Desert," Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, Grand Island, Nebraska; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 141-142.

33. "First Settlers Founded Cairo in Fall 1872," *Grand Island Daily Independent* 13 December 1937.

34. Cairo Roots Society, *Cairo Community Heritage 1886-1986* (Dallas, Texas: The Curtis Media Corporation, 1986), 3; Rand McNally 1994 Road Atlas, (Rand McNally & Company, 1994), 124.

DONIPHAN

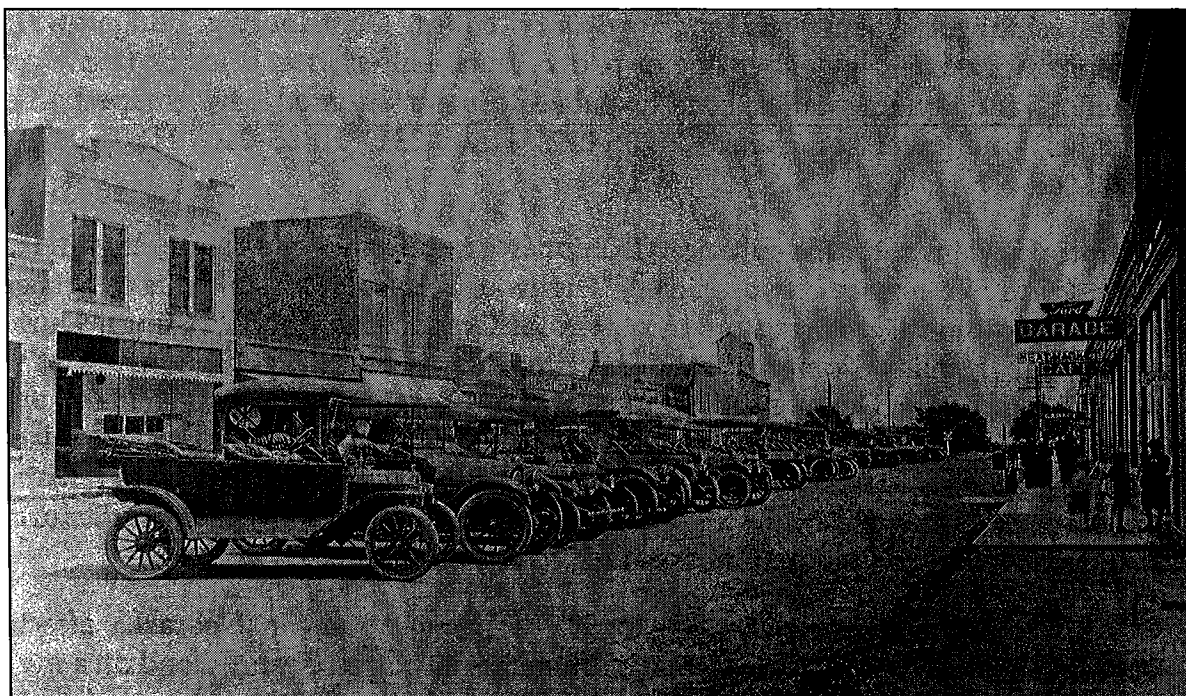
Doniphan is located in southeastern Hall County south of the Platte River, approximately 12 miles between Grand Island and Hastings. The town is located on the south side of the St. Joseph and Grand Island Railroad tracks.

George Martin, his wife, and their two sons Nate and Bob are credited with being the first settlers in the Doniphan area. Two years later, in 1864, W.J. Burger established a trading post three miles north of Doniphan. It was constructed at a crossing of three great westward trails: the Oregon, Overland, and Denver. As early as 1874, a post office operated at a site known as Orchard, which was located in the vicinity of present-day Doniphan. Five years later, in anticipation of the construction of a railroad spur between Grand Island and Hastings, Burger platted a community with lots and blocks on his own land. The new community was named Doniphan after Colonel John Doniphan, an attorney for the St. Joseph and Western Railroad. Samuel Beidelman, Charles Dufford, S.H. Lakin, S. Gibson, and the Upson Brothers were several of the earliest pioneers to settle the area. During the first year of development, Doniphan supported a post office, general store, blacksmith shop, livery stable, and forty residences. Doniphan's first school opened in 1879, with teaching duties undertaken by Emma Smith. It quickly became a commercial district for Hall County residents residing south of the Platte River.³⁵

In the 1880s, Doniphan enjoyed population growth, official incorporation, and commercial prosperity. In 1880, a total of 85 people resided in the community. In recognition of the town's success, residents signed a petition for incorporation in the first month of 1884. Three years later, Doniphan boasted a post office, bank, general store, meat shop, hotel, and clothing shop. Although, a portion of the downtown was destroyed by fire in November of 1887, the commercial district was reconstructed with the assistance of a nearby brick company. The Doniphan Brick Works, which was located to the northeast, probably supplied materials for the community's commercial and residential buildings. The company operated until the 1920s.³⁶

35. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 41; Elton Perkey, *Perkey's Nebraska Place-Names* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1982), 90-91; *History of Doniphan, Nebraska* (Doniphan, Nebraska: The Doniphan and South Platte Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 7-8, 12; Robert N. Manley, *The Town Builders* (Grand Island, Nebraska: The Prairie Pioneer Press, 1985) 67-68; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 132-133.

36. *History of Doniphan, Nebraska* (Doniphan, Nebraska: The Doniphan and South Platte Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 7-8, 32.



Plum Street after turn of the century, Doniphan, Nebraska (SMPP)

Prominent brick commercial buildings extant in Doniphan on Plum Street, the main commercial street in town, include several one-story examples (HL05-006, HL05-017, HL05-018) with features such as ornamental brickwork and concrete trim, and two-story buildings (HL05-005, HL05-007, HL05-015) with corbelled brickwork and segmental arched windows.

Doniphan experienced one of its greatest growth periods between the 1900s and the 1920s. One of the most significant modernizations occurred in 1912 when the village allocated money for the installation of a water works. During that year, electricity was also available to area residents. In 1915 Doniphan supported a general store, theater, bank, physicians office, drug store, harness shop, cafe, fraternal hall, and blacksmith shop. By 1920, the town's population reached 482, an increase of 17 percent in one decade.³⁷ This late boom resulted in the construction of a significant number of bungalows. The residential areas of the community display an in-fill of intact

37. *History of Doniphan, Nebraska* (Doniphan, Nebraska: The Doniphan and South Platte Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 46, 52-53; Jane Graff, *Nebraska Our Towns...Central and North Central* (Dallas, TX: Taylor Publishing Co., 1989), 136; Addison E. Sheldon, ed., *The Nebraska Blue Book and Historical Register, 1920* (Lincoln: A Publication of the Nebraska Legislative Reference Bureau, 1920), 392.

bungalow style houses surrounded by vernacular form buildings such as front gables, side gable, and one and two-story cubes. Contributing bungalows in Doniphan often display either one or one and one-half-stories, brick or frame construction, and ornamentation such as gable dormers, squared bays, shaped wood shingles, and plain brackets. (HL05-022, HL05-031, HL05-040, HL05-047, & HL05-048)

Improved transportation enhanced Doniphan's importance as a community in Hall County. In 1940, surface construction on Highway 281 provided residents easy transportation to the neighboring urban centers of Grand Island and Hastings. During World War II, many Doniphan residents travelled on Highway 281 to work at the Naval Ammunition Depot, near Hastings and the Cornhusker Ordnance Plant, west of Grand Island. The need for increased production during the war brought a large number of people to the area to work in these facilities. Laborers, in need of housing, occupied vacant dwellings in the town. As a result of the wartime manufacturing facilities, Doniphan's population experienced significant fluxes.³⁸

During the 1960s, improvements to the highway system in Nebraska affected Doniphan's economy. The completion of Interstate 80 placed Grand Island on a major thoroughfare across the United States. As a result, new industries moved to the Grand Island area, providing jobs for many Doniphan residents. This business expansion prompted infrastructure improvements in the community. During this decade nearly all of the roads were paved in the town and new housing developments were erected in Bartlet Addition, Flyr Addition, Amick Acres, and White's Sunnyslopes Sub-Division. In 1990, Doniphan's population reached 736.³⁹

GRAND ISLAND

Grand Island is located in the east central portion of Hall County and is situated on the north side of the Platte River. Grand Island received its name from a nearby long island on the Platte River historically known by French-Canadian traders as LaGrande Isle.⁴⁰

38. *History of Doniphan, Nebraska* (Doniphan, Nebraska: The Doniphan and South Platte Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 102; *Rand McNally 1994 Road Atlas*, (Rand McNally & Company, 1994), 124.

39. *History of Doniphan, Nebraska* (Doniphan, Nebraska: The Doniphan and South Platte Bicentennial Committee, 1976), 102; *Rand McNally 1994 Road Atlas*, (Rand McNally & Company, 1994), 124.

40. Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...Central and North Central* (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1989), 127.

The founding of Grand Island was entrenched in the anticipated development of a railroad hub in the vicinity which resulted from activities associated with A. H. Barrows and William Stolley.⁴¹ These men participated in the organization of a company whose objective was to economically support a party of settlers under the direction of R.C. Barnard, a civil engineer. The settlers originated from Davenport, Iowa and consisted mostly of people of German heritage. In 1857, the party reached their destination in the vicinity of current-day Grand Island. This location proved capable of meeting water and farming needs. While the company promised to purchase the land settled, each settler agreed to occupy 320 acres. Approximately one year after settlement, a weekly stage, travelling from Omaha to Fort Kearny passed through Grand Island Station. In 1860, the stage passed tri-weekly and four years later it entered the area on a daily basis. As a result of Grand Island's proximity to the over-land route traversed by settlers and gold seekers, it grew and prospered.⁴²

In 1866, surveyors employed by the Union Pacific transferred the community of Grand Island Station to a new platted location in sections 15 and 16. The earliest streets in the plat ran parallel and perpendicular to the tracks and the commercial center was located at the intersection of Third and Front streets. In the fall of that year, the survey was filed with the Hall County Clerk. By 1870, Grand Island served as a major railroad stop and had a population of 1,057. With an understanding of the importance of the railroad, residents approved an increase of taxes to fund the erection of railroad facilities. Grand Island eventually supported round-houses, and other railroad facilities. As a result of the 1872 incorporation petition, the name of the community changed from Grand Island Station to Grand Island. Following the name change, Grand Island saw the election of a mayor and the adoption of a council system government.⁴³ The presence of the city as a major railroad stop allowed immigrants to enter Nebraska and specifically Hall County from all parts of the country. Thereafter, Grand Island grew into a trading center.

Even though Grand Island experienced an economic depression in the 1870s, it flourished by the next decade with a population of approximately 3,000. The city's quick recovery was directly correlated to the construction of new railroad tracks into the community between 1879 and 1884. In 1879, the Grand Island and Hastings

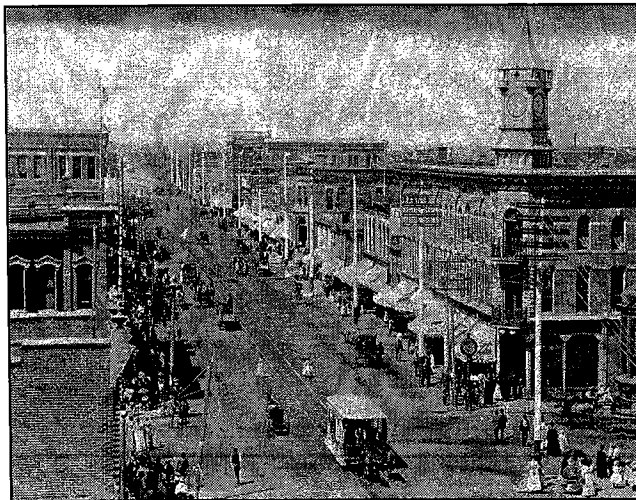
41. The Stolley State Park Historic District (HL00-025, HL00-036, HL00-037) located within the city limits of Grand Island, includes the William Stolley residence, the John Hann Log House, and District No. 1 School. Persijs Kolberg, "Stolley State Park Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination, Listed 12 April 1976.

42. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 7, 9, 11.

43. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 11, 13; Elton Perkey, *Perkey's Nebraska Place-Names* (Lincoln: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1982), 90-91; Robert N. Manley, *The Town Builders* (Grand Island, Nebraska: The Prairie Pioneer Press, 1985) 43-44.

railroad line became operational, and one year later a Union Pacific branch spanned the Loup Valley. In 1884, a Burlington branch was laid to connect the Grand Island to Aurora in Hamilton County, directly east. In 1880, at the onset of this extensive railroad activity, 157 dwellings were constructed.⁴⁴

During the 1880s, new industries came to the city including soap, steam laundries, cigar, furniture, bottling works, broom, fence, granite, creamers, sugar beet, brewery, canning and milling. Grand Island also received modern amenities such as a telephone operation known as the Grand Island Exchange Company in 1880, the organization of the Gas and Electric Light Company in 1884, and the construction of a water system between 1885 and 1886. This period, along with the 1920s and 1960s witnessed several of largest population and construction booms in Grand Island's history.⁴⁵



**Third Street, Looking
West from Bank of
Commerce, Grand
Island, Nebraska, 1900
(SMPP)**

Just one decade later, in the 1890s, Grand Island experienced a recession which also affected the entire state. While Grand Island reported a population growth of less than one percent, the population centers of Lincoln and Omaha decreased by 27 percent. By the end of the decade, the city began to recover.⁴⁶ After the turn of the century, a discussion of Grand Island in a county directory notes its secure economic situation, and its importance to the state as a railroad center: "It is situated on the main

44. Robert N. Manley, *The Town Builders* (Grand Island, Nebraska: The Prairie Pioneer Press, 1985) 37; *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 13, 19.

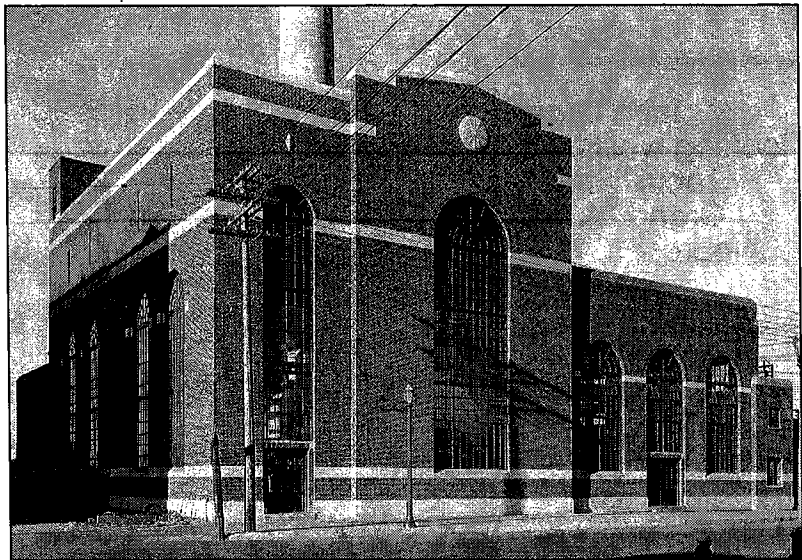
45. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 13, 19, 21, 23; Doniver A. Lund, *The Home Builder, 1882-1982: The Centennial History of the Equitable Building and Loan Association of Grand Island* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Woodruff Printing Company, 1982), 2.

46. Doniver A. Lund, *The Home Builder, 1882-1982: The Centennial History of the Equitable Building and Loan Association of Grand Island* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Woodruff Printing Company, 1982), 14; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 15.

line of the Union Pacific, 154 miles west of Omaha, and on the Burlington & Missouri, 92 miles from Lincoln, the state capital. It is also the northern terminus of the St. Joseph & Grand Island railroad; the eastern terminus of the Grand Island and Wyoming Central railroad, and the southern terminus of the Grand Island & Northern railroad."⁴⁷

In addition to the highly used railroad tracks an early transcontinental automobile route, the Lincoln Highway, also affected transportation through the area. In 1915, the first Seedling Mile was constructed in Nebraska on the eastern edge of Grand Island. The Seedling Mile Program, coordinated by the Lincoln Highway Association, offered free advice and cement to aid in the building of a mile section of road. The Lincoln Highway ran through the heart of the city along Second Street.⁴⁸ The 1924 Complete Official Road Guide to the Lincoln Highway noted that Grand Island offered "Many garages, hotels and eating houses, among them a new ten story hotel with 185 rooms. Five wholesale houses, six banks, three railroads, Union Pacific, division point St. Joseph & Grand Island, and Chicago, Burlington & Quincy. Second largest horse and mule market in the United States; second largest stock and cattle market in Nebraska. Soldier's and Sailor's Home. The oldest sugar manufacturing plant in operation in the United States." An advertisement in the guide prominently displayed the Hotel Yancey (HL06-014), "on [the] Lincoln Highway," with rates at \$1.50 per day.⁴⁹ In the late-1920s, the highway was renamed U.S. Route 30.

**Power Plant in Grand
Island, Nebraska, c.
1920s (SMPP)**

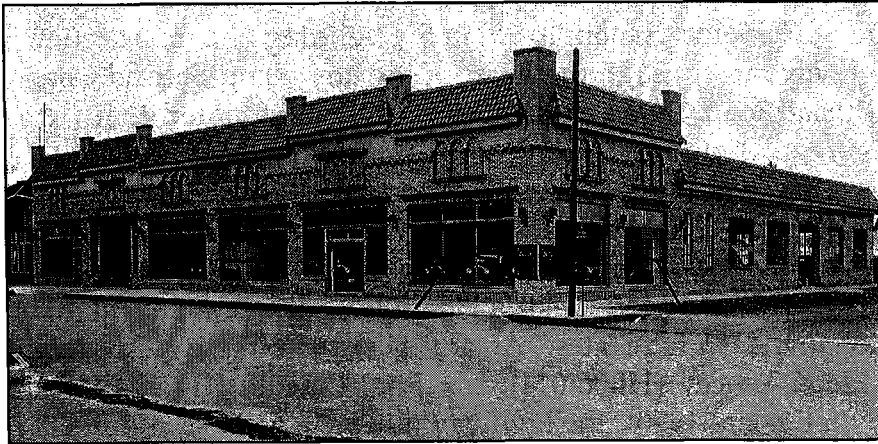


47. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 43.

48. "Route Selected," *Tom Anderson Collection*, Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, Grand Island, Nebraska.

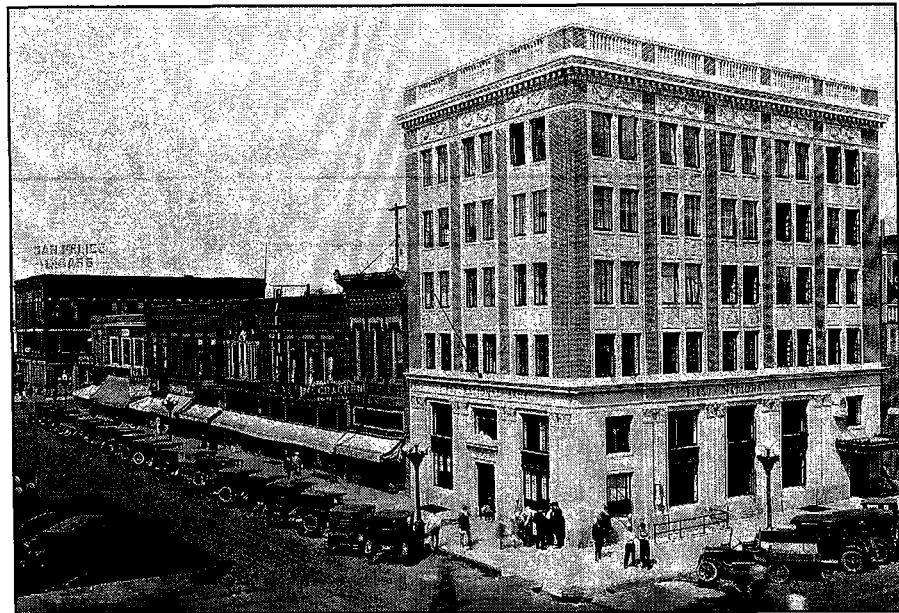
49. *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway* Reprinted in Facsimile from the 1924 Edition, (Tucson, Arizona: The Patrice Press, 1993), 386-387.

In 1910, Grand Island grew to the third largest city in Nebraska and had a stable economic base. Twenty years earlier, Grand Island rated behind both Hastings and Beatrice in size. In 1900, all three of the communities boasted a census figure in the vicinity of 7,000. During the first decades of the twentieth century, inflation was virtually unknown because of set wages and fixed interest rates. The natural oscillations of the agricultural industry proved to be the only area of instability. By 1918, Grand Island enjoyed a water system, a light plant, and storm sewers. In addition a majority of its streets in the business hub were paved.⁵⁰

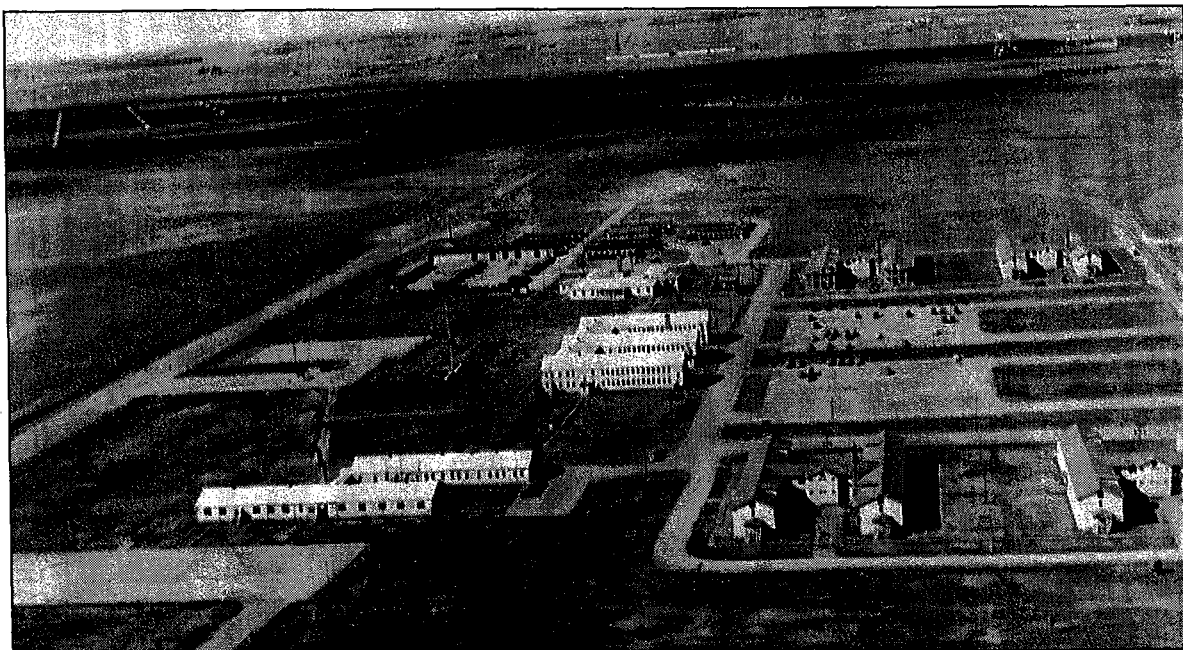


**Ford Service
Garage,
constructed 1929,
Grand Island,
Nebraska (SMPP)**

**Third Street
looking west from
Locust Street,
Grand Island,
Nebraska, 1930
(SMPP)**



50. Doniver A. Lund, *The Home Builder, 1882-1982: The Centennial History of the Equitable Building and Loan Association of Grand Island* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Woodruff Printing Company, 1982), 27, 30; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 109, 112.



Aerial view of the Cornhusker Ordnance Plant, near Grand Island, Nebraska, 1945 (SMPP)

As a result of the activities in Hall County associated with World War II, including the Cornhusker Ordnance Plant (HL00-008) and the Grand Island Army Air Field (HL00-041), the economic conditions in Grand Island changed. To accommodate the large number of new workers entering the area, a planned housing development was constructed. Broadwell Courts, located on a 37.5 acre area of land at the northwest edge of Grand Island, opened to house wartime workers in early 1945. This housing development consisted of one, two and three bedroom units with one bathroom and a combined kitchen/living room. These buildings (HL06-541, HL06-542, HL06-543) featured side gable roofs, asbestos siding, and rectangular plans. The project called for the construction of 200 dwellings. In 1947, fifty units were removed and the remaining buildings housed World War II veterans.⁵¹

The layout of Grand Island stretches across an inclined plane from the low lands near the Platte River. The earliest streets in Grand Island ran parallel and perpendicular to the railroad tracks. Some of the most prominent buildings in Grand Island are located south of the tracks including the Hall County Courthouse (HL06-001), the Carnegie Public Library (HL06-002), several churches, including St. Stephens

51. "Broadwell Courts Units House Vets," File: *Grand Island Streets Located at the Edith Abbott Public Library*.



Typical house in
Broadwell Courts
(HL06-541)
(USWR)

Episcopal Church (HL06-003), schools and upscale dwellings. A large number of the most architecturally significant residential buildings in Grand Island are located within a few blocks of the downtown. Prominent architectural styles and details include Prairie School (HL06-107), Queen Anne (HL06-041), NeoClassical Revival (HL06-049), Shingle Style (HL06-076) and Art Moderne (HL06-052).⁵²

The main business district, consisting of stores, a hotel, theaters, offices, and banks, is located near the railroad tracks. Industrial buildings were constructed on the north and east side of the tracks. Examples of architecturally significant industrial buildings located on the north side of the tracks include the power plant (HL06-624) and the Nebraska Mercantile Company (warehouse, HL06-623). Worker housing, located near the industrial areas, features a variety of vernacular forms including one and two-story cubes, side and front gables, gable ells, gable-T, and bungalows. The airport, which was used during World War II as the Grand Island Army Air Field, is located on the northeast edge of the city (HL00-041).⁵³

A 1985 assessment of street names in Grand Island noted that many streets in the community were named for relatives of developers, as well as leaders in the county and community. Grand Island also has streets named after presidents, generals, presidential and vice presidential candidates and trees. An unusual south side grouping of streets, platted on land originally used for a hatchery, are named for breeds of chickens, including Bantam, Chanticleer, Cochon, Wyandotte streets. In subdivisions or planned developments, topics streets are clustered together around themes such

52. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 56.

53. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 56.

as birds, horses, and Native Americans, and names of native states of early property owners.⁵⁴

Throughout Grand Island's history, it has prospered due to its relationship to several important transportation routes. Its founders relied upon its excellent location as a railroad division point. Due to this designation, Grand Island supported a strong commercial district and the construction of fine residential neighborhoods throughout the city. The money generated from the railroad industry provided for the construction of prominent schools, churches, homes, and civic buildings. The proximity of railroad tracks to the community also encouraged other industries into the area. The rising importance of the automobile also impacted Grand Island. Grand Island, located on the Lincoln Highway, provided services to travellers driving on the transcontinental route. By mid-1960s, Interstate 80, one of the country's most important interstate highways, stretched past Grand Island. In 1990, Grand Island had a population of 39,386.⁵⁵

WOOD RIVER

Wood River, named after a nearby waterway, is located in the southwestern portion of Hall County. It is located approximately 11 miles from Grand Island on the Wood River, which runs parallel with the Platte River, in the Wood River Valley. This area is known for its fertile soil.

The earliest settlers in the vicinity of Wood River were the Irish-born brothers Pat and Alex Moore. As early as 1868, a post office was established and a year later the village was surveyed. In 1874, the community was moved two miles to a site platted by the Union Pacific. James Jackson, a business owner at the original site of Wood River, moved his operation to the new town and was its first occupant. Shortly thereafter, W.B. and A.G. Hollister, F.J. Bowman, and James Kennedy followed Jackson. By the fall of 1874, a post office was established under the direction of A.G. Hollister and a school, which doubled as a church, was opened under the direction of John Allen. In 1880, the Methodist Episcopal Church was the first solely religious building constructed in Wood River.⁵⁶

The initial growth of Wood River was slow but by 1881 commercial and residential construction flourished. In October of 1882, the town was incorporated. By the 1880s,

54. "How G.I. Streets Received Names," *Grand Island Daily Independent* 9 July 1985.

55. *Rand McNally 1994 Road Atlas*, (Rand McNally & Company, 1994), 124.

56. *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 31, 39, 41; Elton Perkey, *Perkey's Nebraska Place-Names* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Nebraska State Historical Society, 1982), 92; A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 14, 74-75.

the town included general merchandise, hardware and drug stores, blacksmith and shoe shops, post office, hotel, saloon, school, flour mill, grain elevator and a number of residential buildings. By 1884, the population was approximately 700. Historically, Wood River was a trade hub for the surrounding township, and its growth was aided by potato and alfalfa crops in later years.⁵⁷



Moore's Opera House constructed in 1892, Wood River, Nebraska (SMPP)

In the first decade of the twentieth century, three buildings with adjoining walls were constructed in the commercial district. Businesses located in Wood River included retail for agriculture implements, bakery, banks, barbers, blacksmiths, lumber yard, carpenters, jewelry, confectionery, creamery, dentist, clothes maker, flour mills, grain dealers, groceries, hardware, harness, insurance, lawyer, livery, newspaper, livestock seller, restaurant, and undertaker. Ten years later, the community also had moving pictures, motor vehicle garages, and pool and billiard halls.⁵⁸

57. A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 121, 127, 129; *Grand Island-Hall County Centennial* (Grand Island, Nebraska, 1957), 31, 41; "Wood River History Dates Back to 1861 When Irish Settlers Arrived in Western Hall County," File: *Wood River, Nebraska, Misc. Articles/History*, Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer, Grand Island, Nebraska.

58. A. F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, ed., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920), 130-131; "Wood River History is Interesting," *The Wood River Sunbeam* 11 December 1980.

The layout of Wood River was typical of other communities platted by the Union Pacific railroad with a T-town plan. While the east-west streets ran parallel to the railroad tracks, the streets ran parallel to the county section line roads. The commercial district of Wood River is located on the north side of the tracks and residential neighborhoods are located on both sides of the tracks. The most architecturally elaborate residential buildings, however are located on the north side of the tracks and included a front gable, concrete brick house with concrete sills and lintels, hipped dormers and wood shakes in the gable ends (HL08-041), a two-and-one-half story frame gabled ell house, (HL08-016), and a two-and-one-half story frame late Queen Anne style house (HL08-022).

The Lincoln Highway, which provided motorists with a transcontinental route, passed through Wood River and played an important role in the development of the community in the early decades of the 1900s. The 1924 *Complete Official Road Guide to the Lincoln Highway* noted that the Lincoln Highway through Wood River was gravel with a local speed limit of eight miles per hour. Services offered along the route in the town included one hotel, two financial institutions, several service garages, 15 offices and retail shops, a mail company, a telephone company, one newspaper, and a free campground.⁵⁹ In the 1930s, the Lincoln Highway was realigned and entered the town on the east side and extended along the tracks. This new route enhanced the commercial district in Wood River. Although the main commercial thoroughfare did not overlap the Lincoln Highway, it was easily accessed. Two garages were intensively surveyed in Wood River as a result of their association with the Lincoln Highway. Both garages are of concrete block construction and have stepped roofs and rectangular plans (HL08-002, HL08-003).

In the 1940s, Wood River experienced economic prosperity with erection of the Cornhusker Ordnance Plant (HL00-008), located northeast of the community. Similar to the neighboring community of Alda, Wood River needed to provide additional municipal service to the growing community of war workers. The ordnance plant also operated during the Korean and Vietnam war. In 1990, Wood River boasted a population of 1,156.⁶⁰

59. *The Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway* Reprinted in Facsimile from the 1924 Edition, (Tucson, Arizona: The Patrice Press, 1993), 388.

60. Jane Graff, coor., *Nebraska Our Towns...Central and North Central* (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1989), 139; *Rand McNally 1994 Road Atlas*, (Rand McNally & Company, 1994), 124.



The Lincoln Highway, the country's first improved road to extend coast to coast, was also arguably the most important road to cross the state of Nebraska in the early twentieth century . It spanned the entire east-west width of Hall County, while directly affecting all but two of county's incorporated communities. The highway, established as early as 1913 in Hall County, was continually used until the mid 1960s when Interstate 80 was completed through the county and enticed traffic to its wider, smoother surfaces. The environmental and economic impact of the Lincoln Highway in Hall County is evident through the extant architectural resources along its route.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY

In 1912, Carl Graham Fisher, an Indianapolis automobile magnate, presented to his colleagues a concept to establish a transcontinental highway. Initially, Fisher's gravel highway, expected to cost ten million dollars, was referred to as the Coast-to-Coast Rock Highway. The highway concept was novel because it discussed both maintenance and funding. During the year that Fisher made his presentation, the majority of roads in the country were utilized to transport freight to and from commercial centers and railroad stops. Since only seven percent of the roads in the country were improved surfaces, the development of the Coast-to-Coast Rock Highway promoted long distance travelling.⁶¹

Fisher immediately began advertising the highway and soliciting donations. In the early stages of the campaign, Henry B. Joy, chief executive of Packard Motor Car Company made a donation and suggested that Fisher ask the federal government to build his proposed highway in honor of Abraham Lincoln instead of erecting a monument. Congress opted for the monument, which stands in Washington, D.C. today. Fisher and Joy's attempt not only served as one of the first efforts in the United States to receive a federal allocation for public roads, but it was an unusual memorial to the late president. Shortly thereafter, Mr. Joy became a chief promoter of the transcontinental highway. On July 1, 1913, he aided in the official formation of the Lincoln Highway Association, which was headquartered in Detroit, Michigan.⁶²

The association's two major goals included soliciting donations and mapping the route of the highway. Criteria utilized for selecting the highway's route included historic and aesthetic waysides, distance between the East and West coasts, juxtaposition with commercial hubs, and community support. The end points of the Lincoln Highway were Times Square in New York City and the Lincoln Park in San Francisco. The Highway was considered to run from east to west, and passed through 12 states: New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Nebraska, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, and California.⁶³

61. The word "improved" defines both minimal grading and graveled road. Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 5-7.

62. Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 9-11.

63. Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 12, 14, 112; Philip Langdon, "Westward on the Old Lincoln Highway," *American Heritage* 46 (April 1995): 50.

When the Association realized that it could not fulfill its goal to raise all of the money necessary to build the road, it focused its agenda to educate Americans about the necessity for good roads. The Association not only collected donations and marketed token memberships and road guides, but also coordinated funds and materials utilized in small segments of road construction. This later endeavor, which promoted improved road development and care, became known as the Seedling Mile Program. In 1914, under the supervision of the Association, construction began on the first Seedling Mile near DeKalb, Illinois. One year later, four Seedling Miles were built on the highway in the Midwest, including two in Nebraska.⁶⁴

During its first decade of existence, the Lincoln Highway Association experienced internal changes in leadership and policies to deal with a new agenda. In 1915, Fisher passed the leadership of the Association to Joy. During that same year, the Association published its first Complete Official Road Guide of the Lincoln Highway. Shortly thereafter, the association oversaw the marking of the route with red, white and blue stripes and the letter "L" painted on telephone poles along the highway. In 1918, Frank A. Seiberling, founder of the Goodyear Tire Company, replaced President Joy. A year later, the Seedling Mile Program ended. In total, the Lincoln Highway Association provided one million dollars for Seedling Miles constructed in Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, Illinois, and Nebraska.⁶⁵

The Lincoln Highway Association remained active until 1928 when it disbanded. During its final year, the association undertook its last promotional effort when it recruited Boy Scouts to erect memorial markers along the entire route.⁶⁶

ROAD DEVELOPMENT IN NEBRASKA

In the state of Nebraska the state enacted legislation supporting the construction and maintenance of public roads as early as 1879. By 1895, the state legislature created the State Board of Irrigation, which eventually aided in road construction and improvements. Shortly after the turn of the century, a federal Census of Roads reported that Nebraska boasted 79,462 miles of road. In 1911, partly as a result of increased

64. Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 18-19; Carol Ahlgren and David Anthone, "The Lincoln Highway in Nebraska: The Pioneer Trail of the Automotive Age," *Nebraska History* 73 (Winter 1992): 173, 176.

65. Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 21, 75, 77, 82.

66. Philip Langdon, "Westward on the Old Lincoln Highway," *American Heritage* 46 (April 1995): 52; Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 110-111; Carol Ahlgren and David Anthone, "The Lincoln Highway in Nebraska: The Pioneer Trail of the Automotive Age," *Nebraska History* 73 (Winter 1992): 178.

automobile activity, the State Board of Irrigation was renamed the State Board of Irrigation, Highways, and Drainage. Eight years later it became the Department of Public Works.⁶⁷

On October 8, 1913, over two hundred delegates of the Platte Valley Transcontinental Route Association met in Merrick County, Nebraska to discuss the designation of the Lincoln Highway through the state. The meeting included state and local good road advocates and the vice president of the Lincoln Highway Association. Although the route of the highway had been determined a month earlier, at the end of the meeting, Central City became the first in the country to endorse the Lincoln Highway proclamation.⁶⁸

The Lincoln Highway in Nebraska generally followed the banks of the Platte River and tracks of the Union Pacific Railroad. In 1914, Nebraska State Engineer Donald D. Price noted that along with the Meridian Highway and the Omaha-Lincoln-Denver Highway, the Lincoln Highway functioned as one of three major thoroughfares through the state. The state's road system consisted of only 40 improved miles.⁶⁹

Federal and state legislation provided for improved road conditions and maintenance in the country, as well as Nebraska. In 1916, the Federal-Aid Road Act, which provided \$75 million dollars for public roads, passed Congress. It allocated money to states based upon postal activity, census figures, and square miles. One year later, the Nebraska Legislature granted comparable allocations, as well as approved construction which resulted in a system to connect each county seat in the state. By 1918, the Federal Office of Public Roads and Rural Engineering consented to roadwork on 512 miles divided into 16 projects, with another 952 miles in the planning stages. In 1919, Nebraska legislated the framework for a highway system by supporting the development of a network of roads to each corner of Hall County. Shortly thereafter, forty road maintenance trucks were assigned to Hall County to haul gravel and sand. By the next decade, the county received an award in a "Better Roads Contest" in recognition of its well developed section line roads.⁷⁰

67. George Koster, *A Story of Highway Development in Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Roads, 1986), iv, 11-14, 20-21.

68. Carol Ahlgren and David Anthone, "The Lincoln Highway in Nebraska: The Pioneer Trail of the Automobile Age," *Nebraska History* 73 (Winter 1992), 173

69. George Koster, *A Story of Highway Development in Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Roads, 1986), 15; "The Lincoln Highway United the States," *Omaha World-Herald Magazine of the Midlands* 25 December 1988.

70. Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 76-77; George Koster, *A Story of Highway Development in Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Roads, 1986), 9, 17; A.F. Buechler and R. J. Barr, eds., *History of Hall County Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Western Publishing and Engraving Company, 1920) 208; Jane Graff, coor. *Nebraska Our Towns..Central & North Central* (Dallas, Texas: Taylor Publishing Co., 1989), 131.

The United States involvement in World War I and its impact on the homefront allowed the country to see the need for an improved transportation system. In 1921, after the passage of the Federal Highway Act, states were required to match federal money. In Nebraska, 5,619 miles of road qualified. One year later, a total of nine transcontinental highways competed for funds, including the Lincoln Highway. In an effort to bring uniformity to the road system in the United States, federal and state highway officials assigned numbers to designate national highways in 1925. Shortly thereafter, the Lincoln Highway was renamed United States (U.S.) Highway 30 in the East and Midwest, and U.S. routes 40 and 50 in the West.⁷¹

During the 1920s, Nebraska was one of two states in the country with state legislation mandating that they could not incur a debt in order to develop public roads. It also made the policy not to raise state taxes for road development. This undoubtedly meant that most of Nebraska's rural and urban roads remained unpaved longer than in other parts of the country. Road improvement expenditures in the state were further spared as a result of the end of World War I, when Nebraska received surplus equipment, such as motor vehicles. This equipment was in turn allocated to individual counties for road enhancement purposes. Oliver W. Johnson, a chairman and later Deputy State Engineer, noted in 1927 that, "Most of the paving was in Omaha and a little bit in Grand Island and Lincoln. All of the rest of the state highways were either gravel or dirt. Even Highway 30, the Lincoln Highway, wasn't graveled."⁷²

During the Great Depression, New Deal programs, including the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA) and the Civil Works Administration (CWA), worked to advance the Nebraska highways. While the NIRA provided almost eight million dollars for road development in Nebraska, the CWA financed road construction crews for 198 projects. In the 1930s, state highways in Nebraska significantly improved with approximately 70 percent of construction completed on the system. During that decade, excluding 30 miles of unimproved road in Nebraska and Wyoming, the Lincoln Highway evolved into an up-to-date route and displayed the latest technology and material.⁷³

71. George Koster, *A Story of Highway Development in Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Roads, 1986), 26; Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 93, 95; Philip Langdon, "Westward on the Old Lincoln Highway," *American Heritage* 46 (April 1995): 54.

72. George Koster, *A Story of Highway Development in Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Roads, 1986), 22-24.

73. George Koster, *A Story of Highway Development in Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Roads, 1986), 38, 42; Mary Cochran Grimes, "Establishing Nebraska's Highway System, 1915-1934," *Nebraska History* 73 (Winter 1992): 169; Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 113.

Between 1930 and 1940, Nebraska's road system increased by 15 percent, jumping from 9,752 to 11,220 miles. In 1930, the Nebraska Bureau of Roads and Bridges with its eight divisions boasted only 6,882 miles of managed roads including graveled, dirt, paved, and oiled. Ten years later, the state system included 9,000 miles of managed roads, a difference of approximately 31 percent.⁷⁴

As a result of World War II, the War Department and the Public Roads Administration established a highway system in the country, known as Strategic Network of Highways, designated for military use, as well as special consideration for federal funds. Three main military routes passed through Nebraska, including U.S. 30. After World War II, in response to the toll taken on the established roads due to wartime transportation and the realization of the need for new and improved roads, President Dwight Eisenhower signed the 1956 Interstate Highway Act which resulted in the construction of Interstate Highway 80. In Nebraska, the first contract was let for Interstate 80 near Gretna in 1957, however, the route was not completed until 1974. It traverses the state from east to west and parallels a majority of the route originally designated as the Lincoln Highway/Highway 30. The Interstate's construction resulted in a decline of travelers on Route 30 and precipitated the closing of many businesses associated with the highway.⁷⁵

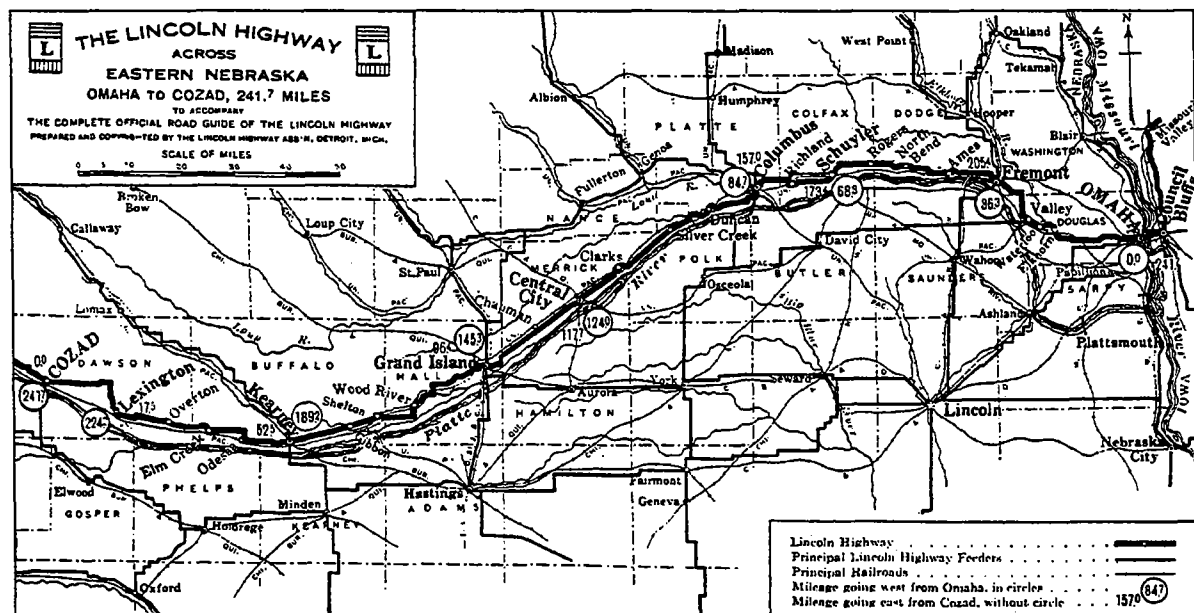
THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY IN HALL COUNTY

The main route of the Lincoln Highway in Hall County travelled from east to west in a zig-zagged, southwesterly direction. Second Street through Grand Island was officially selected for the route because much of it was paved. It passed through the most prominent neighborhoods, one block from the central business district, and it extended under the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad viaduct, thereby avoiding crossing the tracks. Upon leaving Grand Island, the highway featured several different routes prior to realignment. As early as 1913, the Lincoln Highway left Grand Island at the southwest corner of the community and headed in a southwesterly direction until it crossed the Union Pacific track approximately 2.5 miles out of the city. The highway then extended southwesterly on the north side of the tracks and passed through the village of Alda. One mile past Alda, the road headed west on the section line for two miles, then it turned south for two miles, and again west for four miles. At this point the road turned south and headed into Wood River for

74. George Koster, *A Story of Highway Development in Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Roads, 1986), 31, 43.

75. George Koster, *A Story of Highway Development in Nebraska* (Lincoln, Nebraska: Department of Roads, 1986), 69, 44; Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 131.

approximately one-half mile. It then turned in a southwesterly direction and followed the north side of the railroad tracks out of Hall County.⁷⁶



Lincoln Highway as it traverses east central Nebraska, 1924

One of the first and most significant improvements to roads in Hall County, as well as the rest of state was the construction of the Seedling Mile. The first of these paved concrete demonstration segments in the state was completed at the northeast edge of Grand Island (HL06-696) in 1914. Fred W. Ashton, a Grand Island attorney and Hall County Counsul for the Lincoln Highway Association, completed the Seedling Mile application. It specifically noted that \$1,170.00 raised from local membership certificates would be used to widen the road from the standard nine feet to sixteen feet, as well as guaranteed the involvement of the county board and city council in the management of construction procedures. On August 14, 1915, following approval by the national Lincoln Highway Association, the Hall County Board, and representatives of the Lincoln Highway and the National Cement Manufactures' Association opened bids for the construction of the Seedling Mile and chose the proposal submitted by Ray Kingsbury of \$4,375.00 for labor. While the Lincoln Highway Association provided the cement, the Nebraska Culvert Manufacturing Company offered steel culverts. The Association's official engineer, from Grand Island, the Portland Cement

76. "Route Selected," *Grand Island Daily Independent*, Tom Anderson Collection, Stuhr Museum of the Pioneer Prairie; *Official Road Book of the Nebraska State Automobile Association* (Fremont, Nebraska: Road Book Department of the Nebraska State Automobile Association, 1913), 53.

Association, and the American Institute of Architects provided advice regarding the Hall County project.⁷⁷

On August 30, 1915, in a ceremony attended by the secretary of the Grand Island Commercial Club, members of the Woman's Park Association and the Lincoln Highway Auxiliary, Lincoln Highway Counsul Fred Ashton broke ground for the Seedling Mile.⁷⁸ In support of the project, a local paper published a view of the new paved highway section, stating "Great oaks from little acorns grow. Long roads of concrete from 'seedling' miles will spring."⁷⁹ Grand Island's Seedling Mile was completed on November 3, 1915 and opened to the public thirteen days later. This section of road, which previously had a sandy and uneven surface, displayed smooth concrete and rounded sides. As the Association had hoped, other Nebraska communities soon followed Grand Island's example and within a few months Kearney and Fremont also completed Seedling Miles.⁸⁰



**Breaking Ground
for Seedling Mile,
Grand Island,
Nebraska, 1915
(NSHS)**

In the 1920s, the name of the Lincoln Highway changed to Highway 30 and the route underwent realignment to parallel the Union Pacific railroad tracks through the Hall County. This realignment, based on a 1922 agreement with the Union Pacific, decreased the number of railroad crossings in the path of the route, as well as

77. Tom Anderson, "Hall County's Seedling Mile Holds Memories of Nation's First Transcontinental Highway," *Prairie Pioneer Press* 25 (October 1991); "'Mile' Contract Let," *Grand Island Daily Independent* 14 August 1915; The Lincoln Highway Association, *The Lincoln Highway: The Story of a Crusade That Made Transportation History* (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1935), 130-131.

78. "Ground Broken," *Grand Island Daily Independent* 31 August 1915.

79. "Seedling Miles," *Grand Island Daily Independent* 4 August 1914.

80. "Personal Column," *Grand Island Daily Independent* 17 November 1915; "Personal Column," *Grand Island Daily Independent* 20 November 1915; Carol Ahlgren and David Anthone, "The Lincoln Highway in Nebraska: The Pioneer Trail of the Automotive Age," 73 *Nebraska History* (Winter 1992): 176.

shortened the distance across the county. Accident statistics were used by Gael S. Hoag, Field Secretary of the Lincoln Highway Association to persuade the Union Pacific to enter into the agreement which eventually shortened the highway by 33 miles across the country and eliminated 24 railroad crossings. In 1930, Highway 30 left Grand Island and headed directly west on a section line road until it was approximately one mile to the east of Wood River and then it passed south to the Union Pacific railroad tracks. At the tracks it continued southwesterly until it reached Wood River. At this point, the highway headed south for approximately two miles, turned west and traveled to the county border. Most likely this route was instituted when the realignment along the tracks occurred. By 1933, Route 30 entered the county on the south side of the tracks and then crossed the Union Pacific tracks in Grand Island and paralleled the north side of the track through the county.⁸¹

**First Arrival at
Opening of
Seedling Mile,
Grand Island,
Nebraska, August
30, 1915 (SMPP)**



The growing importance of the automobile altered the physical landscape of Hall County. As early as 1914, the number of automobiles manufactured exceeded the number of horse drawn vehicles. Automobile repair garages, auto dealers, and gas stations were erected in communities of all sizes. In commercial centers, these facilities began to replace the livery stables, harnessmakers, and blacksmith shops. In Grand Island, a 1915 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map confirms this transformation. This map shows four garages located within two blocks of each other on or just off Second Street, the route of the Lincoln Highway. Each garage had the capacity to hold between 24 and 38 vehicles. The earliest garages often displayed rectangular plans

81. Carol Ahlgren and David Anthone, "The Lincoln Highway in Nebraska: The Pioneer Trail of the Automotive Age," *Nebraska History* 73 (Winter 1992): 177-178; Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 97; *Official Map of Nebraska* 1 July 1930, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska; Department of Roads and Irrigation, *Official Map of Nebraska, State Highway System* 1 July 1933, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Nebraska.

and brick construction. Later garages were built of concrete block with stepped roofs.⁸²

Communities platted as farm markets and railroad stops soon featured new auto-related facilities, and experienced a growth in commerce. Throughout the early decades of the 1900s, roadside facilities kept improving. While the first automobile travellers often slept at camp sites, later motorists tended to stay in tourist cabins which were built in a response to the higher road traffic on the improved roads. These cabins provided cooking facilities and plumbing. Often positioned to enclose a central area, tourist cabins became known as motor courts. The motor courts typically provided recreational facilities for tourists such as tennis courts and horse shoe pits. Shady Bend Motel (HL00-033) stands as one of Hall County's best examples of a roadside property. Located on the northeastern edge of Grand Island, the motor court displays Spanish Revival style architecture. It was constructed by H.O. "Doc" Woodward during the Depression and the complex originally consisted of 35 cabins and six tennis courts. As a result of an increase in roadside facilities and competition, owners often used tourist attractions such as wild animals, rock shops, gift shops, and complementary treats such as free ice water and coffee. In 1935, Woodward followed this trend and obtained three bison and raised them near his business. Early postcards of the complex encouraged motorists to "see the buffalo herd."⁸³



**Shady Bend Motel,
northeast of Grand Island,
Nebraska, photo taken
circa 1940s. (Barnes Aerial
Survey)**

82. Drake Hokanson, *The Lincoln Highway: Main Street Across America* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 18-19; Sanborn Fire Insurance Company, *Sanborn-Ferris Fire Insurance Map of Grand Island, Nebraska* 1915.

83. "Shady Bend Motel Still Haven for Some," *Grand Island Independent* 5 December 1994; "Buffaloes Hardy, Unpredictable, Unruly, Says Islander Who Raises Them as Hobby," *Grand Island Daily Independent*, Tom Anderson Collection, Stuhr Museum of the Prairie Pioneer.

Tourist cabins and motor courts were not the only accommodations sought by Lincoln Highway travellers. The great hotels in larger cities provided more comfortable and luxurious surroundings. The Hotel Yancey (HL06-14), located along the route of the Lincoln Highway on the corner of Second and Locusts streets in downtown Grand Island provided such accommodations. Though construction began in 1917, World War I delayed the completion until 1923. The 150 room hotel featured a cigar stand, billard room, barber shop, pharmacy, main lobby, coffee shop, party and banquet rooms, and a ballroom.⁸⁴

Nonetheless, the majority of Lincoln Highway travellers apparently preferred more economical and accessible accommodations. By the mid 1940s, the motor courts evolved into roadside motels. These one-story facilities included a contiguous row of rooms in one building. They were often located only a few feet from the road and on the edge of communities to allow easy accessibility. Besides sleeping accommodations, motorists also frequented roadside diners and the later drive-in restaurants for quick meals. In both the motels and eateries, neon signs were often used to entice travelers. Changes took place quickly with the construction of Interstate 80 in Hall County in the fall of 1965. When Interstate 80 bisected Hall County, many businesses opened along the new highway. A large number of roadside facilities along the Lincoln Highway could not survive and were forced to close.⁸⁵

Though the Lincoln Highway/Route 30's heyday was less than fifty years, its impact is still remembered today. The highway changed the environment in many small towns along its routes, and remnants of the tourist cabins, motor courts and roadside restaurants are extant but deteriorating quickly, due to the lack of economic incentive to maintain them. Nonetheless, when oldtimers who traveled the highway or lived and worked along its route are questioned about their recollections, many remember its existence fondly.

SURVEY RESULTS OF THE LINCOLN HIGHWAY

During the reconnaissance survey of Hall County, intact resources related to the Lincoln Highway were intensively surveyed. Based upon state road maps and road guidebooks, surveyors travelled each of the routes taken by the Lincoln Highway between its inception until the road was rerouted to closely parallel the Union Pacific

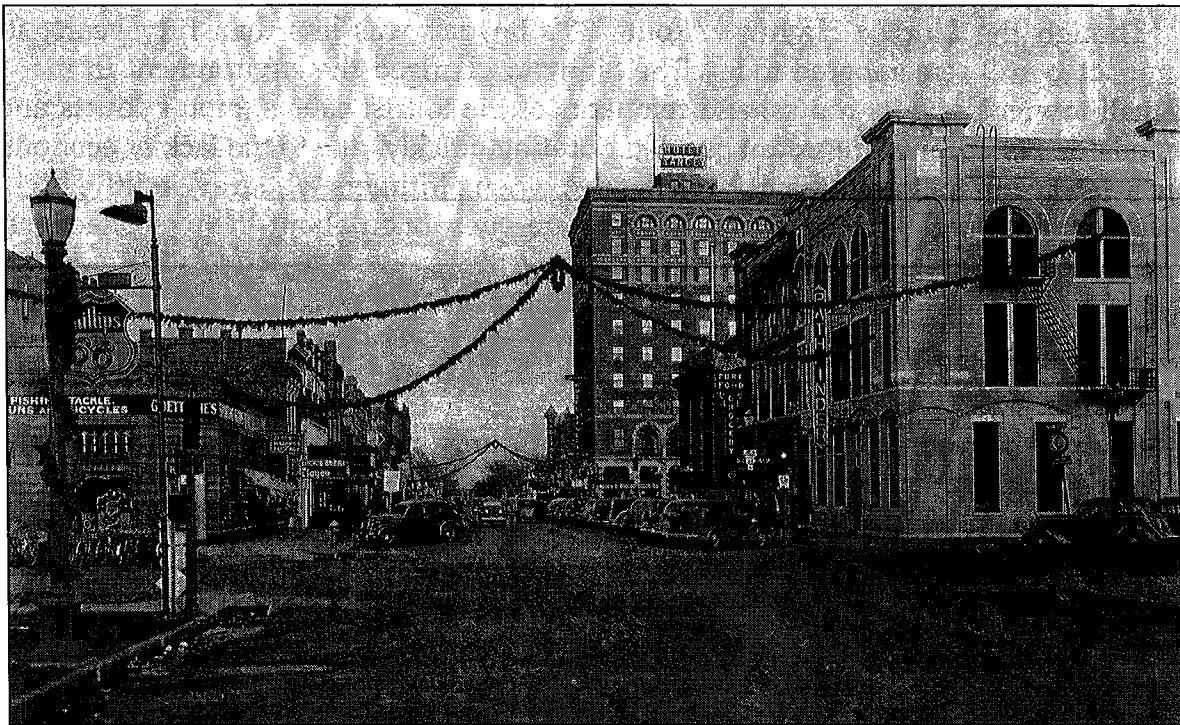
84. Virginia F. Duncan. "National Register of Historic Places Inventory - Nomination Form - The Hotel Yancey, Grand Island, Hall County, Nebraska." Submitted August 1984.

85. "Nebraska Changing Auto Culture, 1900-1930," *Nebraska History* 73 (Winter 1992): 180; "With New Machines in Use Interstate 80 Construction Is Moving Ahead," *Grand Island Daily Independent* October 1965, File: *Hall County-Roads* Edith Abbott Public Library, Grand Island, Nebraska.

railroad tracks. The original routes of the highway often followed the section roads, however, no extant markers were found along the roadside.

One of the most prominent resources associated with the highway in Hall County is Shady Bend Motel (HL00-033). The Spanish Revival influenced complex includes four cabins and one main building. The buildings are all one story and feature stucco siding and red barrel-tile roofs. Since its construction, Shady Bend has lost a number of cabins as a result of deterioration. A second complex, (HL06-694) northeast of Grand Island, is located at the intersection of Seedling Mile Road and the Lincoln Highway. It consists of a one-and-one-half-story commercial building with a gable roof and a variety of siding materials, as well as six cottages. The two unit cottages are one-story, side gable buildings with asbestos siding.

West of the intersection of the Seedling Mile Road and Highway 30 is the historic Stuhr Service Station (HL06-695), presently known as the Kensinger Station. The gas station sits on a triangular section of land. It is a one story, trapezoidal-shaped building with stucco siding, a flat roof, stone sills and an intact vertical neon "gas" sign. This station was constructed in 1939. Located directly behind the station is an original section of the Seedling Mile (HL06-696). The road features its original concrete surface and pavement and is .2 miles in length.



Second and Wheeler streets looking east during the late 1930s, Grand Island, Nebraska (SMPP)

In downtown Grand Island, the Yancey Hotel (HL06-014) stands as one of the most widely known resources linked with the Lincoln Highway in the county. This ten-story brick hotel with 185 rooms was constructed in the 1920s specifically to serve motorists. Another Lincoln Highway related resource surveyed included a garage (HL06-697) located a few blocks northeast of the downtown. It was typical of many garages erected during the same era as it displays similar features such as a flat roof, brick construction, and a triangular carport with a pressed tin ceiling.

Northeast of Alda is Dutch's Place (HL00-147). In 1929, seven cabins were constructed by Morris DeVore, who was known as "Dutch," and ten years later the main building was completed. The complex, which was open until 1960, includes several one-story, frame cabins, three outhouses, a shed, a shower building, and the side gable, frame main building. In Wood River, two concrete block garages were intensively surveyed as a result of their relationship to the highway. Both buildings have stepped roofs, rectangular plans, and are one-story (HL08-003 & HL08-003).

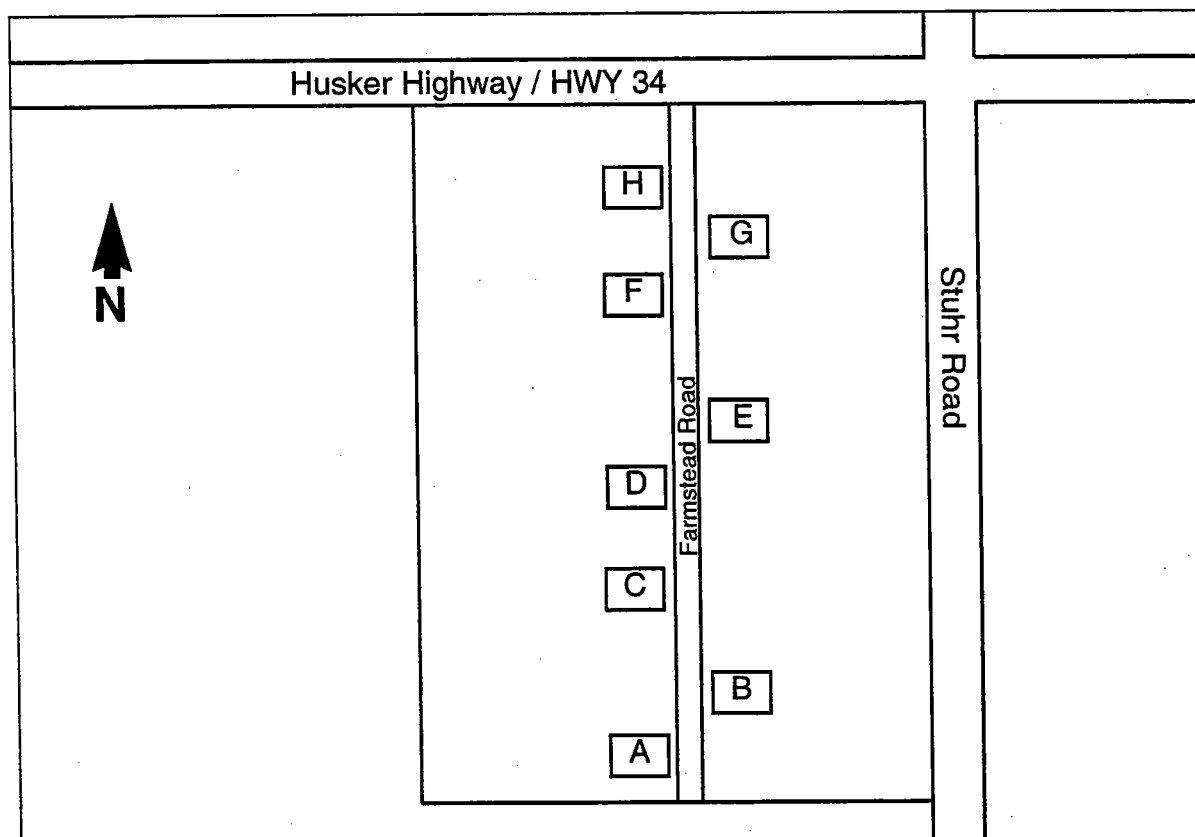
**Garage (HL08-003),
Wood River, circa
1920 (NeSHPO)**



Of all properties surveyed in Hall County in association with the Lincoln Highway, Shady Bend (HL00-033) and the Seedling Mile (HL06-696) have been determined to be potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places by U.S. West Research, Inc. The Hotel Yancey was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on 13 December 1984.

IV

Resettlement Administration in Hall County



Resettlement Farmsteads in Hall County, Nebraska.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION REHABILITATION FARMSTEAD PROGRAM IN HALL COUNTY

INTRODUCTION

Hall County is home to a relatively rare complex of buildings known as the "Resettlement Farmstead" by local residents. This complex of eight farmstead units (HL06-691, A-H), including houses, barn/garages, chicken coops and outbuildings, is located at the southeast edge of the city of Grand Island on Farmstead Road near

the intersection of Highway 2/34. Conceptualized in the mid-1930s as one of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal programs, the farmsteads were constructed with federal and state relief funds which were administered first by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration and then transferred to the Resettlement Administration. They were intended to provide housing, self-sufficiency and financial security to needy families during the Great Depression, and have provided comfortable, durable homes to their subsequent owners to the present.

HISTORY OF THE RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION

REHABILITATION FARMSTEAD PROGRAM IN THE UNITED STATES

The Great Depression was a period of United States history characterized by economic hardship. President Franklin D. Roosevelt sought to steer the country out of financial despair with legislative acts and the establishment of federal relief agencies. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration (FERA), which originated after the Emergency Relief Act of 1933, allocated money to individual states for distribution. In the spring of 1934, under the authority of FERA, the Rural Rehabilitation Program was established with the goal of aiding rural families suffering from the effects of drought and economic hardship, and to assist them in becoming self-sufficient once again. The program received financial and technical assistance from various agencies such as the Federal Surplus Relief Corporation, the Extension Service of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, and the Land Policy Section of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration. In 1934 FERA established 22 rural communities and villages with approximately 1,799 units in Alabama, Arkansas, South Dakota, Texas, South and North Carolina, New Mexico, Georgia, and Nebraska. The largest rural community was located in Halifax County, North Carolina with 294 units and some of the smallest were in Richardson, Hall, and Buffalo counties, Nebraska with ten units.⁸⁶

The Resettlement Administration, formed by Executive Order No. 7027 on May 1, 1935, assumed responsibilities held by other relief agencies by financially assisting impoverished rural communities throughout the United States. The Emergency Relief Act of 1935 supported the agency economically. A number of prominent relief programs fell under the direction of the Resettlement Administration including the Rural Rehabilitation Division and the Land Program of the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, the Division of the Subsistence Homesteads of the Department of the Interior, and the Land Policy Section of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration.

86. Paul K. Conkin, *Tomorrow a New World: The New Deal Community Program* (New York: DaCapo Press, 1976), 131, 334-335; Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935) ii, 4-5.

Under the direction of Rexford G. Tugwell, the Resettlement Administration's three main goals included reestablishing urban and rural families in productive lifestyles, preserving the soil, and providing monetary, scientific, and mechanical aid to farmers.⁸⁷

RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION REHABILITATION FARMSTEAD PROGRAM IN NEBRASKA

In the state of Nebraska, the Rural Rehabilitation Program received assistance from the College of Agriculture and the University of Nebraska. The Nebraska Rural Rehabilitation Corporation, a financial board, was established to assist in the monetary activities of the Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration (NERA). NERA supervised four relief divisions, one of which included the Rural Rehabilitation Division. A state director, appointed by the agency's administrator, managed the rural rehabilitation division. Activities were separated into nine districts each with a representative appointed by the state director. In the tiered system, the nine districts were again separated into territories comprised of one to three counties. In turn, the territories were supervised by a manager.⁸⁸

The Rural Rehabilitation Division directed six specific duties in the state of Nebraska including: the Rural Rehabilitation Farmstead Projects; Individual Family Rehabilitation, Cattle Processing, Drought Relief for Livestock, Feed Purchase and Distribution, and Relief Gardens. The families that qualified for benefits offered by the state rural relief programs were divided into two groups: those living on farms, but not able to retain their current existence; and farm families that had relocated to urban settings.⁸⁹

In 1935, Nebraska received \$517,00.00 more in relief aid than it paid to the U.S. Treasury Department. Not only was the state hurt by the economic depression, but it also experienced natural disasters such as dust storms and grasshoppers. During this year, approximately 125,000 Nebraskan families attempted to make a living by working the land and about five percent of these families received feed supplements for their animals and eight percent received personal aid. Based upon the figures,

87. Murray R. Benedict, *Farm Policies of the United States 1790-1950: A Study of Their Origins and Development* (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1953), 324-325; Murray R. Benedict, *Can We Solve the Farm Problem? An Analysis of Federal Aid to Agriculture* (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1955), 184.

88. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), ii, 3-5.

89. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 6.

approximately eight to twelve percent of families in Nebraska were eligible for rehabilitation assistance.⁹⁰ In order to assist several of these farm families, the Rural Rehabilitation Farmstead Project was initiated. The premise for its origin was the relocation of families to small plots for production of fruits and vegetables. By setting up small farming plots, it was reasoned, the program could help a greater number of families.⁹¹

Before choosing the land to support the new farmstead program, soil was collected throughout the state of Nebraska and analyzed for quality. Agencies and institutions that assisted in this process were the Extension Service, the College of Agriculture, the Agronomy and Soil Survey and Water Conservation Departments of the University of Nebraska. Besides soil type, three additional conditions were considered for the selection of sites for the rural rehabilitation projects. First, an area needed to have a history in agriculture, as well as a large number of families eligible for relief. Second, the area needed to have an adequate water supply, whether it be rainfall or irrigation. The third, and final consideration, was the access to markets for the produced goods. Additional considerations included the level of need to find alternate situations for families on the relief rolls in a particular county, and the availability of suitable land in a particular vicinity.⁹²

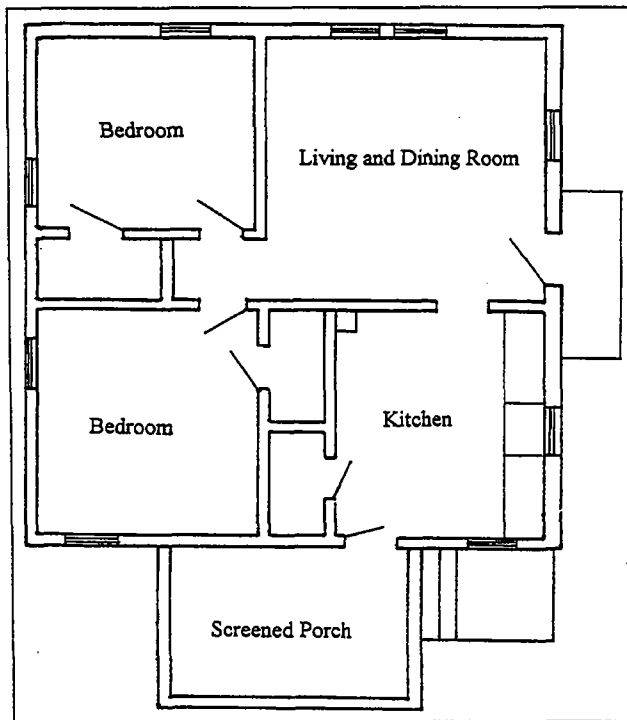
Following the results of the soil types and land analysis based upon the criteria established for farmsteads, eight rural rehabilitation farmstead project areas were selected in Nebraska near the following cities: Kearney, Fairbury, Grand Island, Falls City, Loup City, South Sioux City, Scottsbluff, and Omaha. By 1935, the state purchased a total of 1,568 acres throughout Nebraska for \$149,764.80 to support the project. The Omaha area project was the state's largest effort, with 799 acres and 100 units, whereas, the project in Kearney only utilized 57 acres and eight units. Individual farmsteads ranged in size from seven to sixteen acres.⁹³

90. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 2; Melvyn Dubofsky and Stephen Burwood, ed., *Agriculture During the great Depression* (New York: The Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990), 138, 140-142.

91. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 6-7.

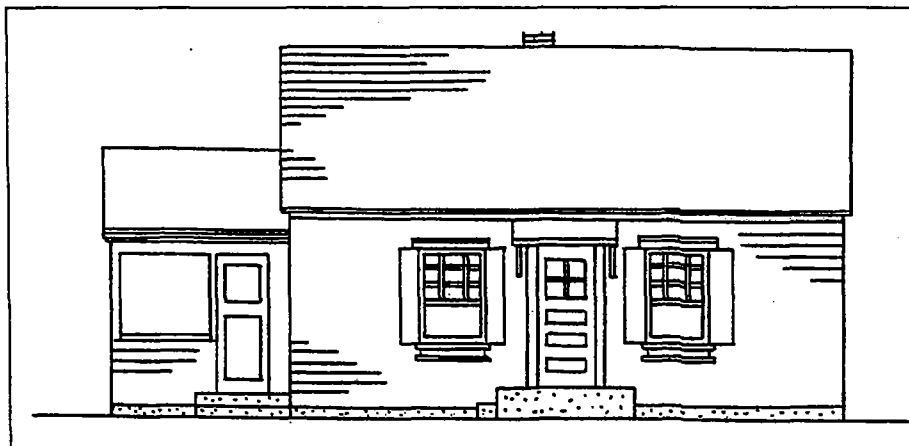
92. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 7, 8.

93. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 7-8.



Floor Plan of Small House
(A Study of Rural Rehabilitation Program, 1935)

Side Elevation of Small House
(A Study of Rural Rehabilitation Program, 1935)

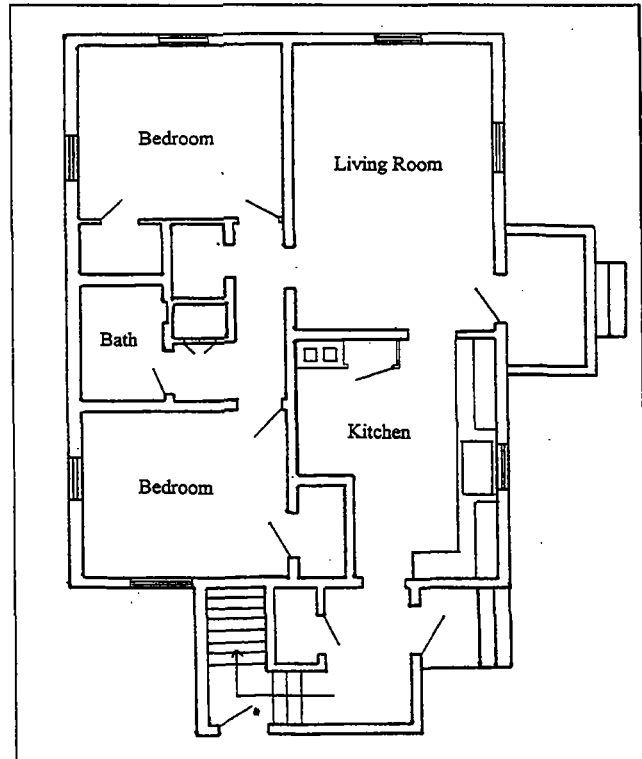


The building styles used for the Resettlement Farmsteads in Nebraska and nationwide were based on standardized plans and display simple designs. Variations were limited to the placement of porches, pitch of roof lines, and arrangement of buildings on the individual farmsteads.⁹⁴ Three standard house plans were utilized to accommodate a range of family sizes. The smallest plan, which measured 24' x 26', dis-

⁹⁴ Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 9-10.

played a combined living and dining room, a kitchen, two bedrooms, and an 8' x 12' screened porch. A plan, which was 24' by 32', was larger than the above plan because it also included space for a bathroom. The third plan differed from the other two plans as a result of a stairway which provided access to two bedrooms located on the second floor. By 1935, few farmsteads were constructed with full basements.⁹⁵

Floor Plan of Large House
(A Study of Rural Rehabilitation Program, 1935)



Side Elevation of Large House
(A Study of Rural Rehabilitation Program, 1935)



95. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 9-10.

Architectural trends in the state of Nebraska and practical needs dictated the construction styles for buildings erected for the Rural Rehabilitation Farmstead Project. In an attempt to defray potential resentment from the surrounding rural community, authorities were conscientious not to incorporate amenities in the new houses that were not found in the homes of nearby neighbors, such as indoor plumbing. Further, it was also hoped that the farmstead occupants would aspire to better conditions and plan for future updating of the facilities. Floor plans for the house and placement of the outbuildings which expedited daily duties were taken into consideration. Prior to construction the Work Division received the authority to construct the farmsteads after the Rehabilitation Division supplied the architectural plans and materials; a system that encouraged relief recipients to supply the labor.⁹⁶

A 1935 *Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska*, described the farmstead houses:⁹⁷

The foundation walls are of concrete. The superstructure is of the standard frame construction. The outside walls consist of 2" x 4" studs, shiplap sheathing, a layer of building paper and red cedar lap siding. The inside finish usually consists of lath and plaster...Rough flooring and 13/16" oak finish floor is used. The roofs are shingled with red cedar. The exterior finish is of white pine, the interior of square edge Douglas fir, stained and varnished to match the floors. All of the houses are completely wired for electricity.

Each farmstead unit was allotted a barn/garage and chicken coop. The barn/garage, which displayed frame construction and a concrete floor, had space for two cows, a vehicle, and feed. The chicken coop, which also displayed frame construction, measured 16' x 12' and was designed by the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture. Drinking water was provided by wells with "force head pumps" located near the kitchen door of each unit.⁹⁸

Families selected to occupy the Rural Rehabilitation Farmstead needed to meet several criteria. First, the family must have been on the relief rolls of the county where the project was constructed. Second, the head of the household had to be between 35 and 50 years old. Third, the family size needed to range from four to six persons. Once a family submitted an application, it was scrutinized by three

96. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 9, 11.

97. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 10-11.

98. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 10.

different agencies including the Relief Division, a local board, and a representative of the Rural Rehabilitation division.⁹⁹

The chosen families were provided a one year lease for a token fee. Stipulation for the possession of the unit was contingent upon the ability of the applicant to abide by the farming plan established for the unit. A one year probation period existed, and thereafter the family was eligible to purchase the farmstead on a long-term payment plan.¹⁰⁰

RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION REHABILITATION FARMSTEAD PROGRAM IN HALL COUNTY

The Grand Island Resettlement Farmstead project received authorization early in 1934. By November 1934, workers were hired to begin construction on the ten unit complex. All materials for the units including lumber and concrete, were purchased from local firms, and local relief laborers were hired to complete the construction. One of the units was comprised of an existing house and barn, which were used during the construction phase of the project for storage and shelter for the workers.¹⁰¹

The original plans for the Hall County farmstead units included a four-room house with screened porch, a small dairy barn for two cows, chicken coops and a storm cellar. The houses were originally intended to be wired for electricity, however one oral account indicates that this did not happen at the time of construction.¹⁰² Though indoor plumbing was not installed during construction of the unit houses, each farmstead had its own well. Six acres were set aside to be shared by all occupants of the complex, comprised of five acres for crops and one for pasture. Additionally, each unit individually maintained seven and one-fourth acres for orchard, garden, and a poultry yard. A large well for irrigation was also constructed for use by all ten units.¹⁰³

99. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 11-12.

100. Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, *A Study of the Rural Rehabilitation Programs in Nebraska* (Lincoln: Nebraska Emergency Relief Administration, 1935), 12.

101. "Farm Center Construction Is Under Way," *Grand Island (Nebraska) Daily Independent*, 19 November 1934.

102. Interview with Wilbur and Richard McCumber, Conducted via telephone by U.S. West Research, Inc., 20 June 1995.

103. "Farm Center Construction is Under Way," *Grand Island (Nebraska) Daily Independent*, 19 November 1934.

The act provided that, "all labor supply centers, labor homes, labor camps and facilities formerly under the supervision of the Farm Security Administration or transferred to the War Food Administrator were to be liquidated."¹⁰⁹ As a result of the government's need to dispose of the units quickly, it lost money on the sale of the rural projects. In the sale of 7,276 of the 8,945 rural units, the government received approximately fifty percent of the invested value. By 1948, the government found buyers for the remaining units associated with the Resettlement Administration. Two years later, the 1950 Act (64 Stat. 98), reinforced the liquidation procedures and required that the unused funds of state rural rehabilitation corporations be transferred for individual states' use.¹¹⁰

Under congressional pressure to liquidate the units, they were sold whenever possible at fair market value to low-income families who met certain governmental standards. However, none were sold to people who had higher debts than assets and as a result, many of the original homesteaders who had anxiously anticipated the opportunity to purchase their farmsteads did not qualify and the farmsteads were sold to other candidates.¹¹¹

The post-Resettlement Administration ownership of the individual units located at the Grand Island project is uncertain. The government disposal of the units was not a high profile news item in the area, and records about the eventual transfer of the farmstead properties is not readily available. These questions may be more thoroughly investigated through further research at the National Archives, where records of the transfer of properties will likely have been filed.

SURVEY RESULTS OF THE RESETTLEMENT ADMINISTRATION REHABILITATION FARMSTEAD PROJECT, HALL COUNTY

A total of eight (8) main houses, seven (7) garage/barns, seven (7) vegetable cellars, and five (5) chicken coops were identified in the survey of the Hall County farmstead project. Five units display the original configuration of one house and three outbuildings. However, the original layout of most of the complexes have been altered with the addition of modern outbuildings such as sheds or garages. The farmstead

109. Murray R. Benedict, *Can We Solve the Farm Problem? An Analysis of Federal Aid to Agriculture* (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1955), 199, 200.

110. Murray R. Benedict, *Can We Solve the Farm Problem? An Analysis of Federal Aid to Agriculture* (New York: The Twentieth Century Fund, 1955), 185, 196, 200; Paul K. Conkin, *Tomorrow a New World: The New Deal Community Program* (New York: DaCapo Press, 1976), 230-231.

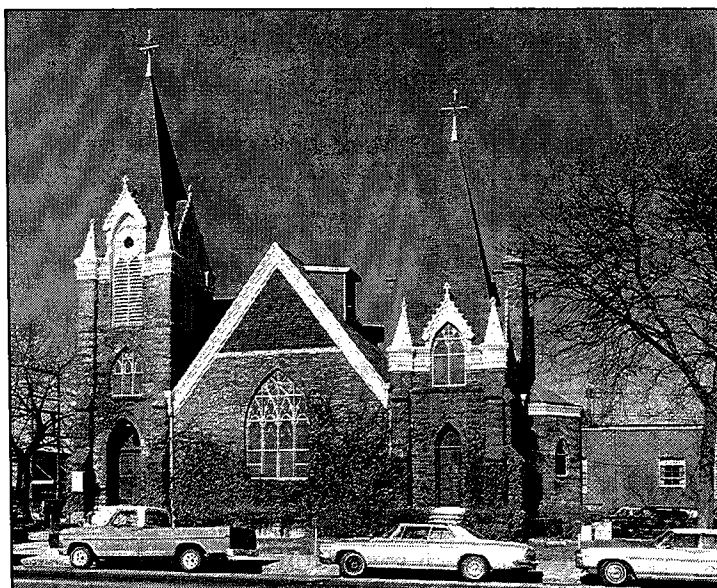
111. Paul K. Conkin, *Tomorrow a New World: The New Deal Community Program* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1976), 229-230.

project is located southeast of Grand Island, south of Highway 2/34 in the northeast quarter of Section 34, Township 11 North, Range 9 West. The farmsteads are sited in a staggered pattern along Farmstead Road. Several modern houses have been constructed between the government constructed farmsteads. While some of the original land acreage provided for each farmstead has been reduced to accommodate the in-fill houses, many of the units retain their original land allotment. Mature trees line the road and provide shade to residents. The land on either side of the road is level and in some cases is still agricultural.

While a majority barn/garages and chicken coops retain their original forms and materials, a large number of the houses display modern alterations, additions, and materials. However, these buildings are still easily recognizable due to the pitch of the roofs, form of the main building, and placement of windows, doors, and chimneys. A unique feature, located behind seven of the eight main houses, is a vegetable cellar which was historically used to store and preserve the produce grown on the plots. One of the most intact farmsteads (HL06-691A) in the project area is located at the south end of Farmstead Road on the west side. This property's integrity has not been compromised by any additional outbuildings. It retains its original main house, a chicken coop, garage/barn and vegetable cellar. The positioning of each building on this plot emphasizes the plan set forth at the conception of the project to make these units time-efficient in regards to chores. Although some alterations have occurred, the eight farmsteads of the original ten farmstead units all appear to be in good condition, as well as in use. They stand as a symbol of the impact that relief programs instituted during the Depression in Nebraska and in Hall County.

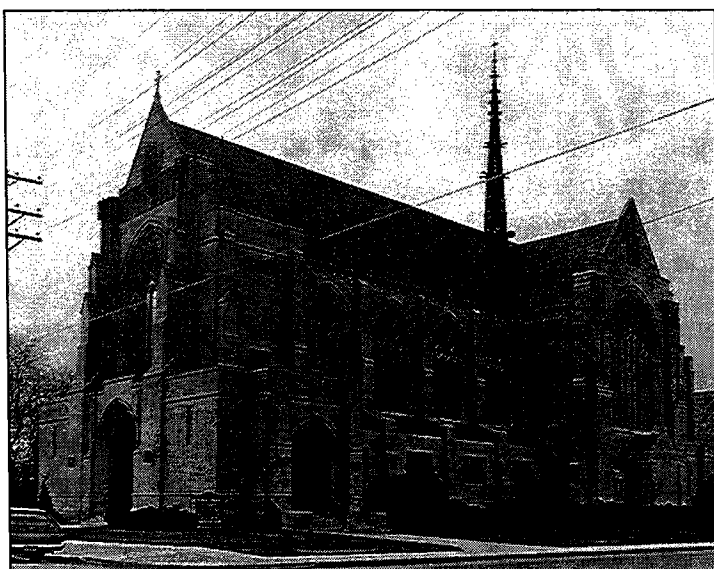
pinnacles, lancet and arched windows, and steeple entrances. Virtually all churches identified appear to have been constructed either just prior to or after the turn of the century.

Four churches in Grand Island appear to be potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



HL06-003

St. Stephens Episcopal
Church
Gothic Revival Style
1888-1889

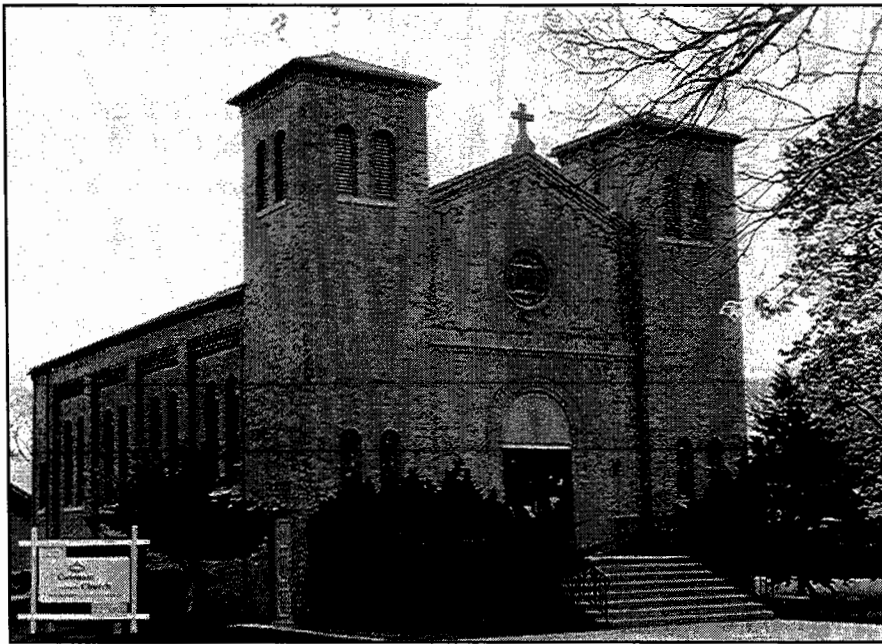
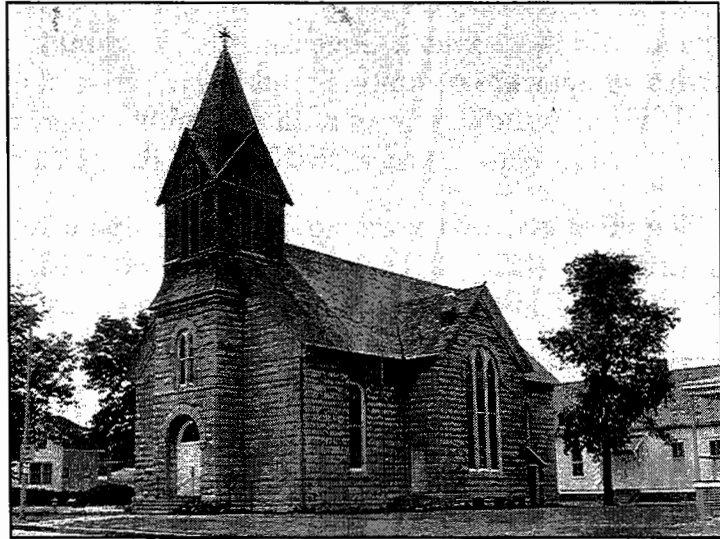


HL06-004

Cathedral of the Nativity
of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Gothic Revival Style
1926-1928

HL06-009

Ev. Lutherische
Dreienigkeits Kirche
Gothic Revival Style
Influence
1894-1896



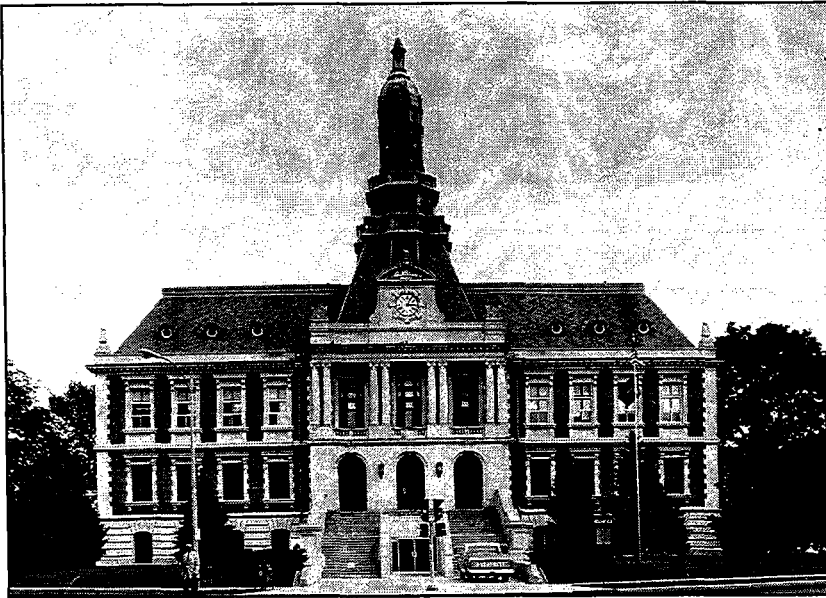
HL06-412
Church
Spanish Revival
Style
ca. 1920s

HISTORIC CONTEXT: GOVERNMENT

Government refers to the process of ruling through an organization, political machine, agency, or individual. Governmental jurisdiction is divided between local, state, and national. This system, which is often limited by spatial and constitutional boundaries, enacts legislation and enforces law. Properties associated with this context include federal, state, and local office buildings, courthouses, post offices, fire and police stations, libraries, military buildings, and prisons.

The reconnaissance survey of Hall County identified a number of properties associated with this context. Government-related buildings in this county often reflect the styles which were common in public buildings of the early twentieth century. In general, public buildings were built of quality materials and display high-style architecture, such as Neo-Classical Revival and Beaux-Arts Classicism.

The most obvious example of a government-related building is the Hall County Courthouse (HL06-001), located in Grand Island. This building, which displays Beaux-Arts Classicism features, was designed by Thomas R. Kimball in 1901.



HL06-001
Hall County
Courthouse
Beaux-Arts
Classicism Style
1904
Listed on National
Register in 1976

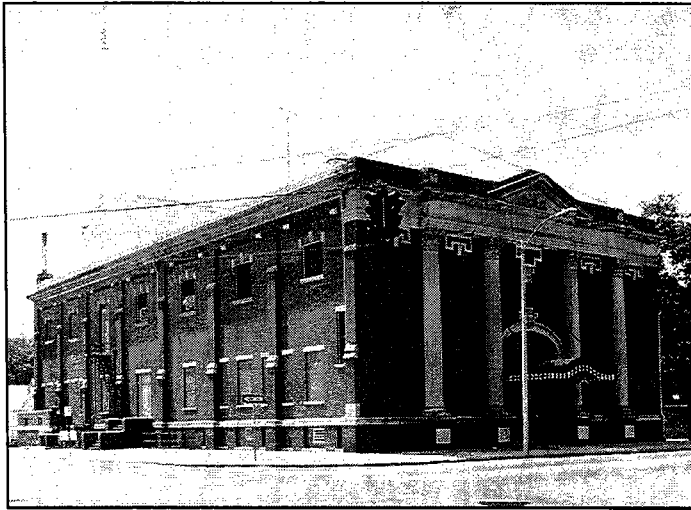
HISTORIC CONTEXT: ASSOCIATION

Association refers to the foundation on which joining and belonging to groups and/or organizations are formed.

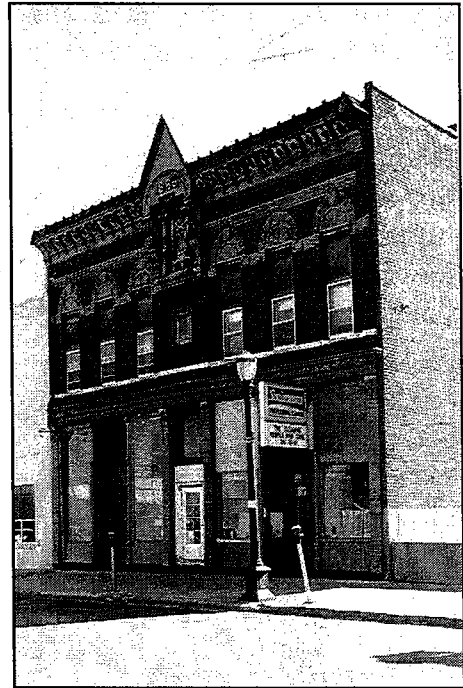
Social organizations provided cultural, economic, and political arenas for residents of Hall County. Popularity of social groups grew quickly after the Civil War when immigration to the United States substantially increased. Common meeting places for these organizations included the upper floors of commercial buildings and even property purchased by lodges specifically for halls.¹¹²

Two halls have been determined to be potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places in Hall County. Both buildings are located in the heart of Grand Island's downtown.

¹¹². Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: A Manual for Historic Properties* (Madison, Wisconsin: State Historic Society of Wisconsin, 1986), Social and Political 5-1 to 5-6.



HL06-008
Liederkranz Building
Neo-Classical Revival Style
1911-1912
Listed on National
Register in 1976



HL06-135
Grand Army of the
Republic Building
Queen Anne Style
1886

HISTORIC CONTEXT: EDUCATION

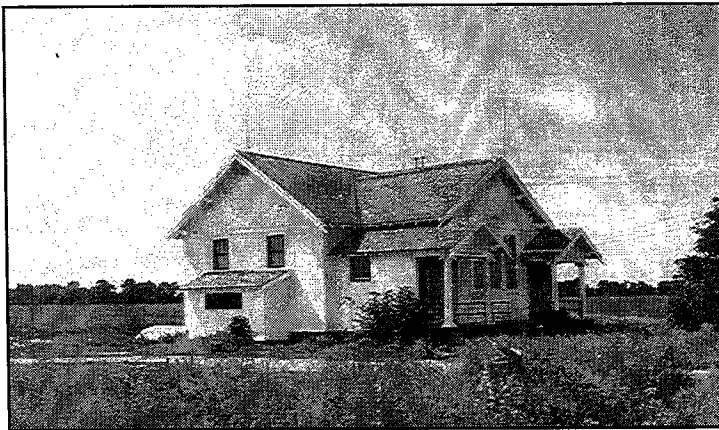
Education generally refers to the process of transferring knowledge, or skills to a recipient. Properties associated with this context include private and public schools, vocational schools, colleges and universities, specialized schools, and museums.

The reconnaissance survey of Hall County identified a number of rural and urban schools associated with education. The rural schools were typically frame with a gable roof and vernacular form, smaller than their urban counterparts. A relatively small number of rural schools were recorded. Many had been either remodeled to serve a different purpose or abandoned. The survey identified elementary, middle, and high schools in the urban areas of the county. The urban schools were usually brick buildings with more than one level. These schools were typically architect designed and thus represent architectural styles reflective of their period of construction.

It is interesting to note that a majority of the schools in Grand Island, as well as those in smaller towns reflect the Neo-Classical Revival style. This style, which represents order and symmetry, was often used in the design of educational buildings in

the country in the 1920s and 1930s. Other architectural styles, such as Georgian Revival and Gothic Revival, also influenced school design in the county.

Another architecturally significant example of the education context is the Grand Island Carnegie Library (HL06-002). Plans for this Neo-Classical Revival style building were completed in 1902 and construction began one year later. Prominent features on the library include ornamental trim consisting of stone, terra cotta, and molded pressed brick, as well as cast stone ionic columns, symmetrical facade, and double door with transom.



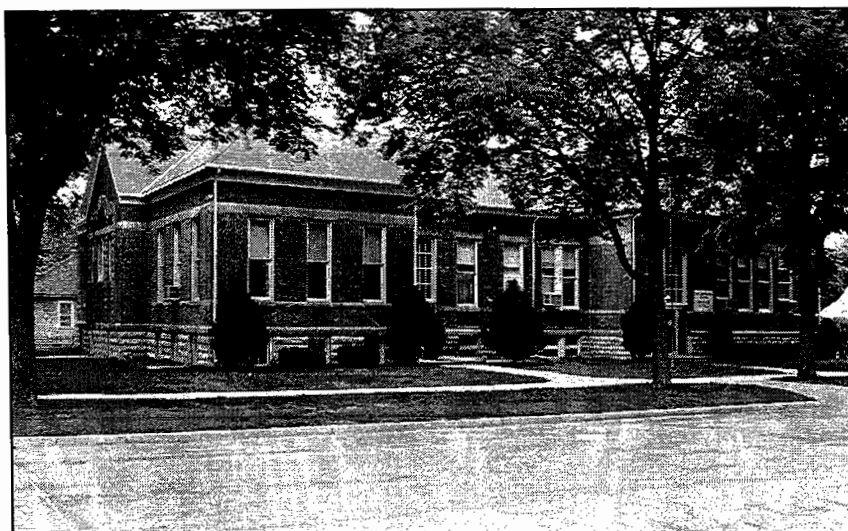
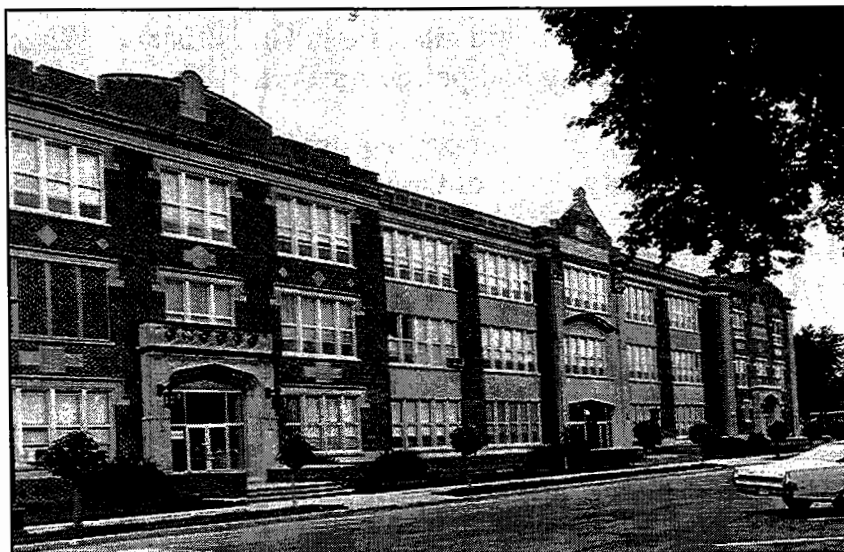
HL00-006
Pleasant Valley School
Neo-Classical Revival Style
Influence
ca. 1920
Hall County (Rural)



HL06-002
Carnegie Library
Neo-Classical Revival Style
1902-1905
Grand Island

HL06-126

Walnut Junior High
School
Gothic Revival Style
ca. 1920
Grand Island



HL06-128

Platt School
Georgian Revival
Style
ca. 1889-1893
Grand Island

HISTORIC CONTEXT: DIVERSION

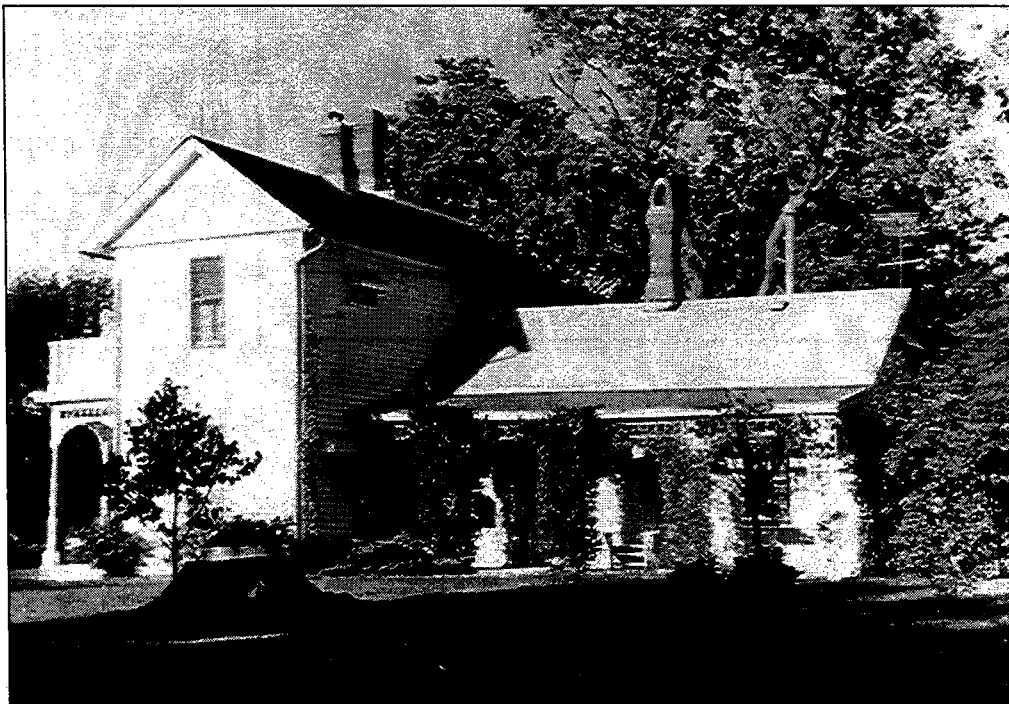
A diversion is defined as "that which relaxes and amuses." The historic context of diversion thus includes sports, games, fairs and expositions, travel and tourism, leisure and recreation, and entertainment. Associated properties include opera houses, movie theaters, fairgrounds, dance halls, nature centers, stadiums, gymnasiums, and parks.

The reconnaissance survey of Hall County identified a few properties associated with diversion. Resources surveyed related to this context included a stadium, gymnasium, museum, opera house, amphitheater, and several bath houses. Often these resources were located in the commercial center of villages, towns, and cities. Besides the amphitheater and opera house located in Wood River, the remaining

buildings, structures, and sites are in Grand Island. While all of the towns and villages in Hall County had parks, a majority did not meet the fifty year criteria.

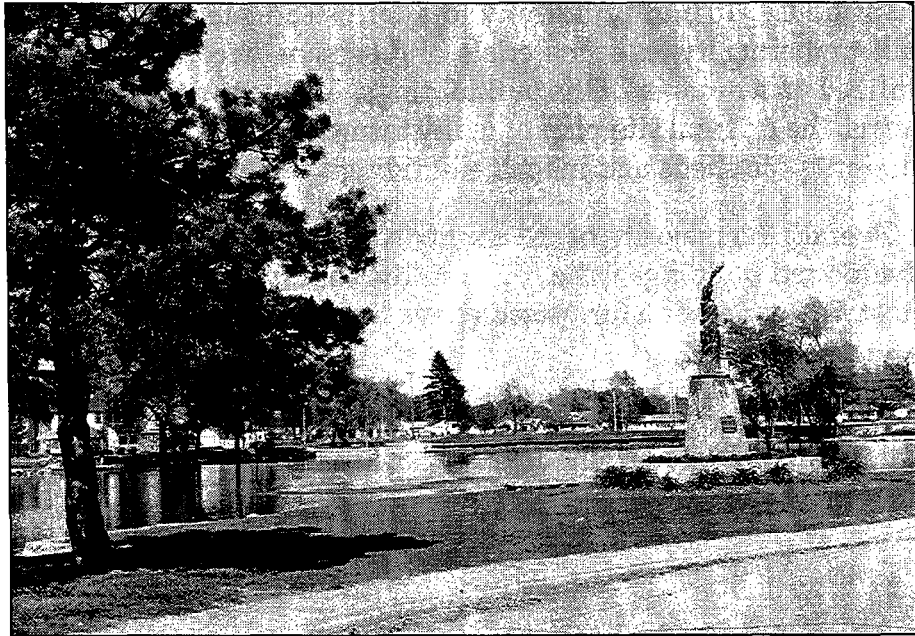
The most significant properties identified as Diversion resources were parks located within the city limits of Grand Island. Stolley State Park Historic District (HL00-026, 036, 037) was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. The ten acre park, which includes the William Stolley residence, a reconstruction of the John Hann log house, and the first public school in the county, is located southwesterly from the core of Grand Island. The residents of Grand Island donated the Stolley Farmstead to the state in 1927, at which time the Nebraska Legislature designated it Stolley State Park.

The Ross and Ashton Park (HL06-540) is located approximately five blocks south of downtown. It consists of a small lake surrounded by a stone wall, a statue, stone gates, and several related buildings. Since the park is lined by streets, which run north-south and east-west, it was not included in the original plat of Grand Island. Judging by the great number of circa 1920s bungalows located in the vicinity, the Ross and Ashton Park was likely constructed in that same era.



HL00-026, 036, 037
Stolley State Park , specifically William Stolley House
1927
Grand Island

HL06-540
 Ross and
 Ashton Park
 ca. 1920
 Grand Island



HISTORIC CONTEXT: AGRICULTURE

Agriculture refers to the production of crops and livestock. Property types associated with Agriculture include farmsteads and ranches, general and specialized facilities, and irrigation.¹¹³

The typical farmhouses which were identified associated with farming complexes were almost exclusively wood frame with horizontal weatherboard siding. Some examples had stucco siding, which appears to have been added at a later date. Brick construction in farmhouses was nearly completely absent. Typically, farmhouses were vernacular in form. The earliest, settlement period houses were often one-story, side gabled, front gabled, gabled ell, or variations on these forms. Occasionally they were as large as one-and-one-half and two stories tall. Second generation houses were often larger in scale, yet still vernacular in form. Several gabled examples, as well as one and two story cubes exist in the county. Very few high style farm houses were identified, and most were variations on the popular 1920s bungalow style, with wide-open porches, low pitched gabled roofs, and shingled gable ends.

In regard to outbuildings, many farmsteads retained original frame barns with horizontal weatherboard siding to match the main house. Many farmsteads erected after the advent of the automobile also have garages which are contemporary with the-

¹¹³. In regards to Hall County, specific consideration was placed on subtopics entitled, "Loess Hills Livestock, General Farming and Cash Grain" (08.04) and "Central Plains Cash Grain and Livestock Production" (08.05).

main house. To add uniformity to a farmstead site, features such as a clipped roof, half-timbering, types of materials, and even paint color seen on the main house were utilized on a number of the outbuildings. To accommodate changing functions on the farms, the original site plan of many farmsteads has been changed by the erection of modern pole sheds and machine buildings.

Overall, the majority of the county's farmsteads were in good condition. Very few abandoned buildings were found in the county. Therefore, it may be concluded that most first generation farmsteads have been replaced by second and third generation buildings.

Only one farmstead surveyed in Hall County, on the edge of the village of Doniphan, was determined to be potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.



HL05-043
Farmstead
1-Story Cube
Doniphan

HISTORIC CONTEXT: COMMERCE

Commerce is defined as the merchandising of goods. The context of commerce includes industrial, wholesale, and retail commerce in addition to trade and barter, movement of goods, and specialized agriculture. Associated properties include retail stores, hotels, motels and cabins, advertising signs and warehouses, and grain elevators.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ In regards to Hall County, specific considerations are placed on the subtopics entitled "Retail Commerce: Hamlets in Loess Hills Region" (12.02.04.01), "Retail Commerce: Villages in the Loess Hills Region" (12.02.04.02), "Retail Commerce: Villages in the Central Plains Region" (12.02.05.02), "Retail Commerce: Towns in the Loess Hills Region" (12.02.04.03), and "Retail Commerce: Cities in the Loess Hills Region" (12.02.04.04).

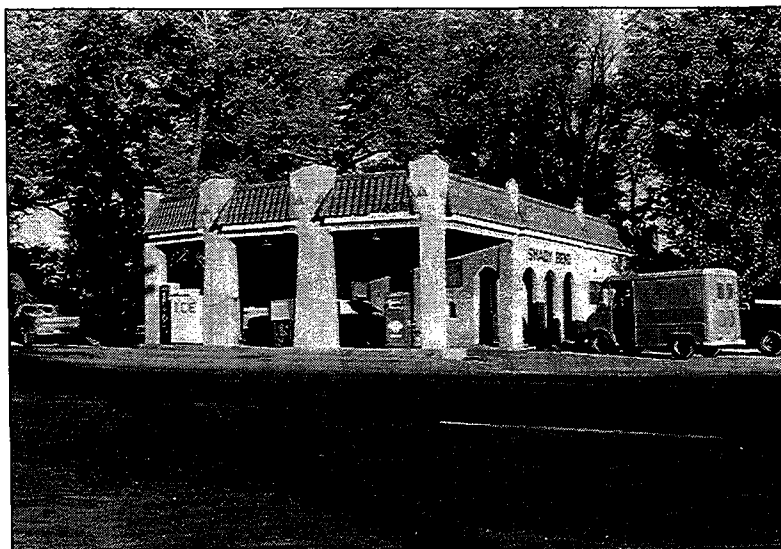
The reconnaissance survey of Hall County identified a number of properties associated with commerce. The majority of properties were stores located in central business districts. These buildings were typically constructed of brick, one to three stories tall. They usually housed retail businesses on the first level and office or residential on the upper level. The first level typically displayed a recessed entrance and large windows for displaying merchandise. The commercial buildings would often include stylistic details such as keystones, cornice lines, pedimented entrances, and decorative brickwork.

A few motor courts and a hotel were also identified throughout the county related to the historic context of Commerce. A majority of these commerce type businesses surveyed in Hall County were associated with the Lincoln Highway. It was typical for the layout to include a main office building with individual units arranged around a central court. Many of these businesses were located within a few feet from main thoroughfares.

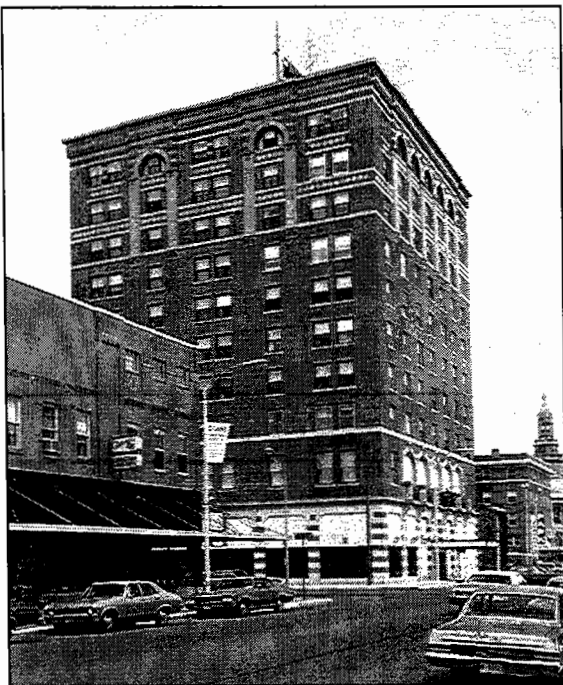
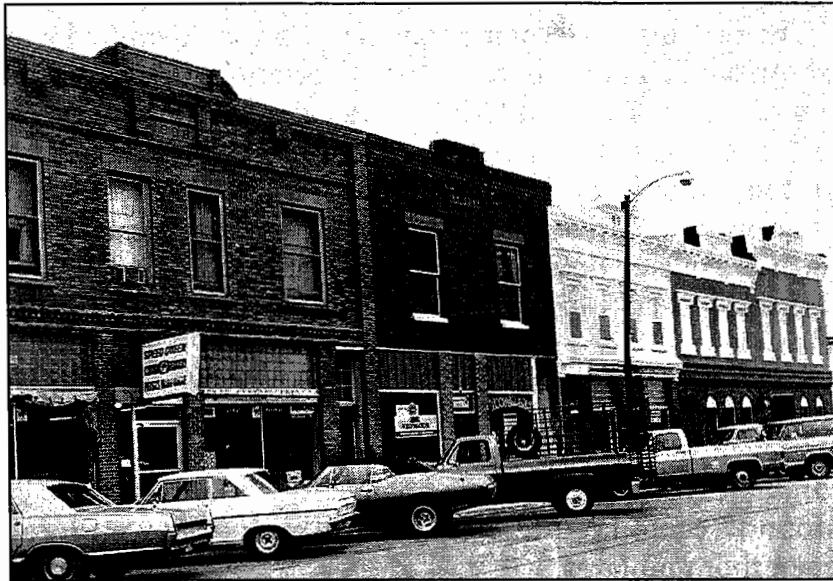
The Hotel Yancey (HL06-014), erected between 1917 and 1923, stands on the southeast corner of Second and Locust streets, which was the route of the Lincoln Highway through Grand Island. This ten-story building, constructed of brick veneer with limestone and terra cotta trim, provided some of the finest accommodations to travellers through the state. The building was designed by Francis W. Fitzpatrick of Omaha.

Four commercial properties are either potentially individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or have already been listed.

SF00-033
Shady Bend Motel
Spanish Revival Style
Influence
ca. 1932
Hall County (Rural)



HL08-005
Wilson Building
Commercial
Vernacular
1908
Wood River



HL06-014
Hotel Yancey
Chicago Style
1917-1923
Grand Island
(Listed on National Register in 1984)



HL06-623
Nebraska Mercantile Co.
20th Century Commercial
Vernacular
ca. 1915
Grand Island

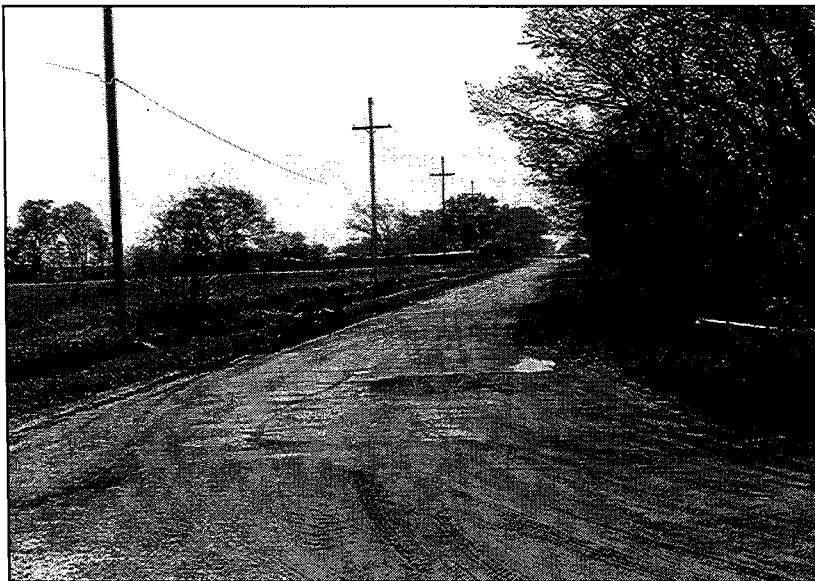
HISTORIC CONTEXT: TRANSPORTATION

Transportation refers to the means of conveying goods and people from one destination to another by land, water and air. Associated property types related to waterways, highways, railroads, and overland trails include depots, gas stations, road markers.

The reconnaissance survey of Hall County identified a few resources associated with transportation. Properties surveyed included Old California Trail markers; railroad depots; gas stations and an original segment of a Seedling Mile associated with the Lincoln Highway.

Two properties were identified as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

HL03-05
Gas Station
Vernacular Form
ca. 1920
Cair

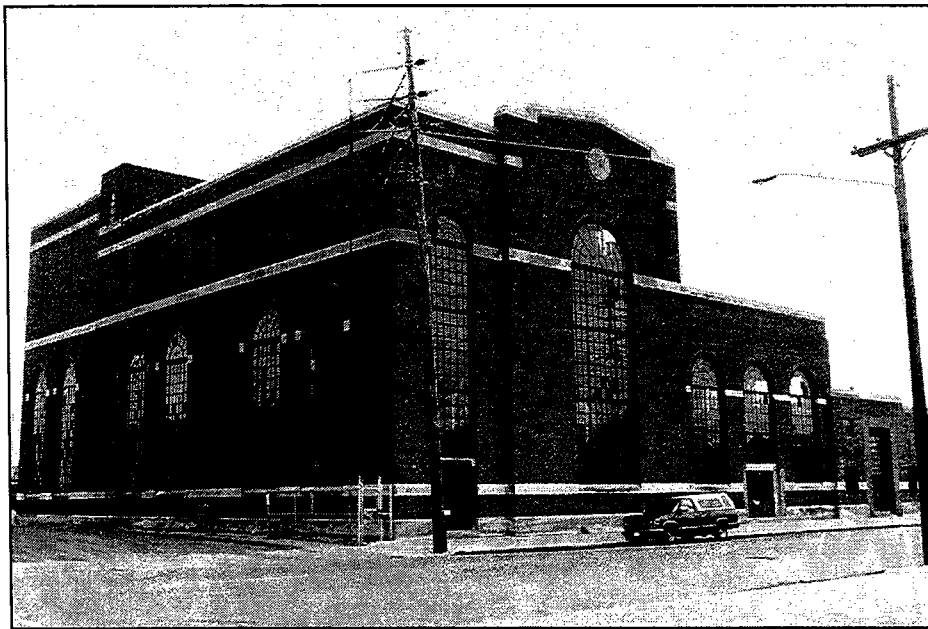


HL06-696
Seedling Mile
.2 Miles
1914
Grand Island

HISTORIC CONTEXT: SERVICES

Services refer to the act or manner of providing support assistance to a community, group, or individual. Support services are often controlled by the government and viewed as necessities. Property types associated with services include banks, hospitals, power plants, restaurants, and office buildings.

The reconnaissance survey of Hall County identified several resources associated with the historic context Services. Buildings such as banks and medical facilities are usually architect-designed and display high style. In the area of public utility facilities, buildings providing service to a limited number of individuals were often erected for function. They usually display brick construction and vernacular form. The Grand Island Power Plant (HL06-624) was also erected primarily for function however it also displays some ornamental features such as large arched windows and glass block windows.



HL06-624
Grand Island Power Plant
Industrial Vernacular
ca. 1920s
Grand Island

HL06-016

First National Bank Building
Neo-Classical Revival Style
ca. 1915
Grand Island



HL06-629

Veteran's Administration
Medical Center
Art Deco
ca. 1945 Grand Island



HISTORIC CONTEXT: SETTLEMENT

Settlement refers to the broad development of an area involving the division, acquisition and ownership of land. The cultural system of an area is often formed by settlement patterns. Property types associated with Settlement include urban and rural settlement patterns and neighborhoods, in addition to dwellings of all types and sizes. The largest group of property types associated with this context include single family detached houses, counting for the vast majority of properties surveyed.

Residential resources located within Hall County display a variety of architectural styles and forms from a period of construction dates spanning the mid-to-late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The majority of residential buildings within the

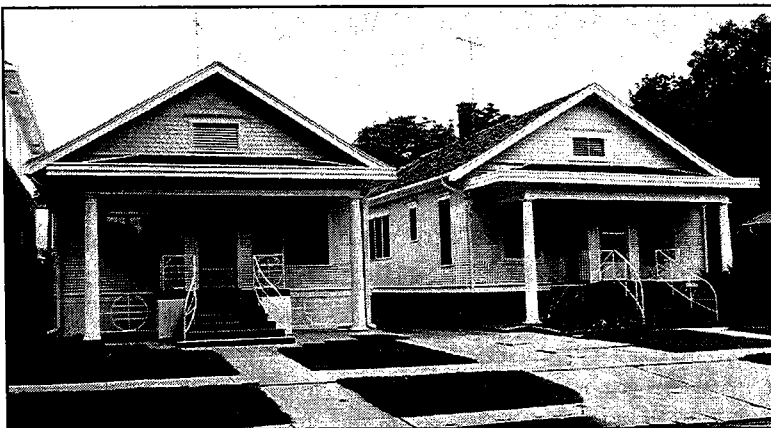
county are frame construction, although a representative number of brick and formed concrete block homes were also found. The majority of the properties surveyed were residential buildings and of those, vernacular forms were the most prevalent. A vernacular form building or structure is often devoid of stylistic references and detail and therefore is described by its massing and roof form. Vernacular forms of residential buildings largely include front gable, side gable, gabled ell, one-story and two-story cubes.

The **front gable** form was a popular form for residential construction in the central part of the United States as early as 1840 through 1925. The front gable form is characterized by a rectangular plan and a gable roof in which the gable end faces the main elevation.

The **side gable** form is similar to the front gable in that it is also characterized by a rectangular plan and a gable roof, but the gable of the roof is oriented parallel to the street. The side gable form of residential construction was dominant from circa 1840 through to about 1940.

The **gabled ell** form, popular from circa 1860 to 1910 in central U.S., usually displays an "L" or "T" shaped plan and is two gabled ends perpendicular to each other. The one and two-story cube form buildings are distinguished by a square plan and hipped roofs.

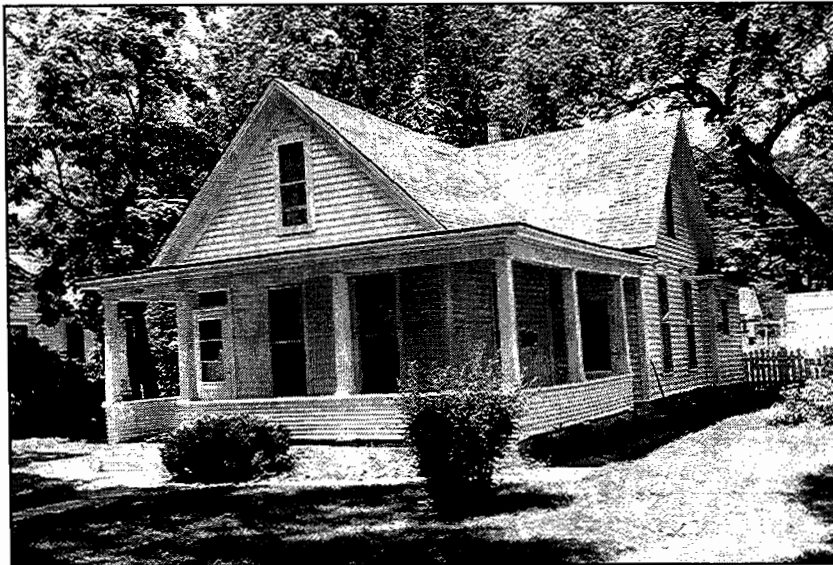
The **one-story cube** was found in the central U.S. from approximately 1870 to 1930 and the **two-story cube** from as early as 1850 to 1880, when it overlapped with the American Foursquare which has similar in massing and roof form as the cube.¹¹⁵ Since Hall County is located in Nebraska and architectural styles often moved in a wave across the country, many of the vernacular construction time frames date approximately one decade later than in states east of the Mississippi.



Front Gable Example
HL06-056
Grand Island

¹¹⁵ Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: A Manual for Historic Properties Vol. 3* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1986), 2-3, 7.

Side Gable Example
HL08-025
Wood River



Gable Ell Example
HL06-025
Grand Island

One-Story Cube Example
HL06-035
Grand Island





Two-Story Cube Example
HL06-038
Grand Island

High style buildings and structures are represented less prominently than the popular vernacular form in Hall County. Very few houses represent true high style forms of residential architectural styles, although a majority of the vernacular form houses have elements and details of architectural styles. Residential styles represented, fully or in part, in the county include, Queen Anne, Bungalow/Craftsman, Tudor Revival, Prairie School, Moderne, International Style, and Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival.

The Bungalow/Craftsman Style was one of the most prominent style utilized for residential development in the county, especially in the urban areas. This modest dwelling style is characterized by simple horizontal lines, wide overhanging eaves, front or side gable roofs, and a large open porch. The low massing and horizontal lines of the building made it appear low to the ground, even in a one-and-one-half or two-story design, although the one-story bungalow was the most prevalent design.

Entire clusters/neighborhoods of Bungalow/Craftsman Style houses are located in Grand Island. The high percentage of Bungalow/Craftsman Style homes in the county can be attributed to a number of factors. This style was prominent across the United States from about 1910 to 1940. This period of popularity corresponds to a period of significant growth within the county. During this time the population of Hall County rose from 20,361 to 27,523. The Bungalow/Craftsman Style was extremely popular with the middle and working class because they had easy access to plans through catalogues and popular magazines. The popularity of the design style was promoted in many publications of the early twentieth century such as *The Craftsman*. The style was also featured in builders' catalogs and mail order house catalogues of the day, such as Sears, Roebuck and Company and Montgomery Ward. The popularity of style may also be attributed to its promotion by local builders and developers in Hall County.

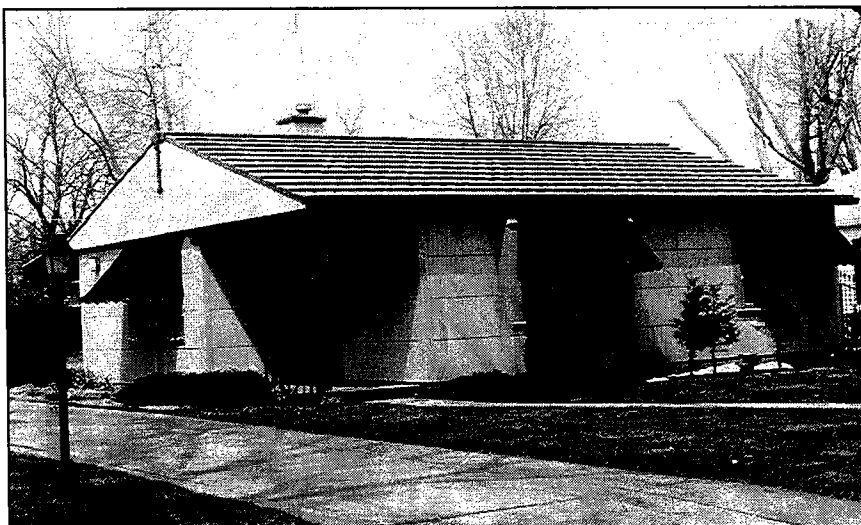
Bungalow Example
HL06-097
Grand Island



Bungalow Example
HL06-61
Grand Island

A total of five Lustron houses were also identified in the county (HL06-320, HL06-321, HL06-382, HL06-465, and HL08-033). Lustron houses, built in the late 1940s and early 1950s, are prefabricated, enameled steel buildings. Produced in Columbus, Ohio, the parts for an entire house were shipped to the purchaser and assembled on site. These houses, constructed completely of two foot square steel panels with a concrete slab foundation, were available in a standardized plan, including one, two and three bedroom variations. Color choices for Lustron Houses include beige, pink, yellow, and blue. Optional detached garages were also constructed by the Lustron Company. Because Lustrons were manufactured only between 1947 and 1951, less than 3000 of this type of house were built in the United States.¹¹⁶

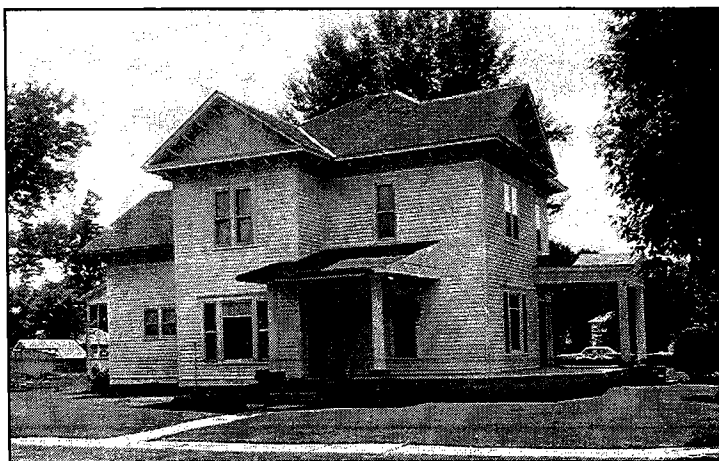
¹¹⁶ Barbara Wyatt, ed., *Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin: A Manual for Historic Properties* (Madison, Wisconsin: State Historic Society of Wisconsin, 1986), Architecture 4-12.



Lustron House
Example
HL06-382
Grand Island

Thirty-one properties associated with the historic context of Settlement were identified as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

HL03-004
House
Italianate Influence
ca. 1900
Cairo



HL03-031
House
Dutch Colonial
Revival
ca. 1915
Cairo

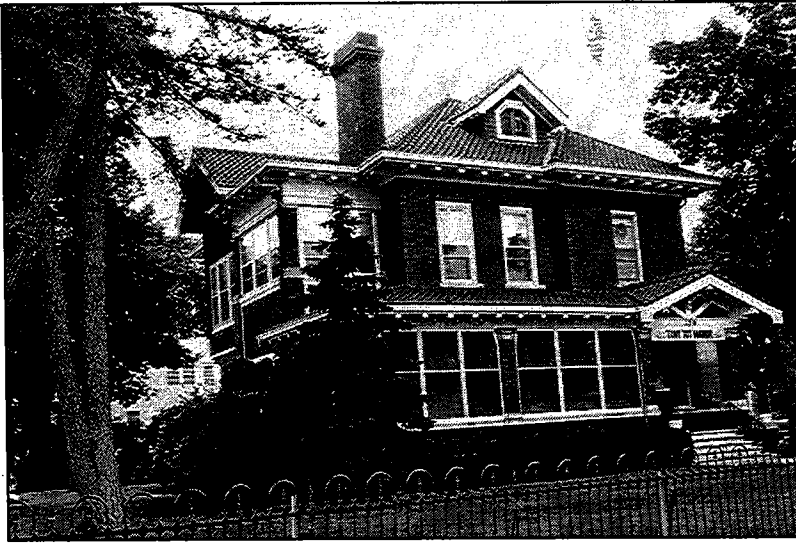
HL05-020
House
American Foursquare
ca. 1920
Doniphan



HL05-045
House
Neo-Classical
Influence
ca. 1920
Doniphan

HL06-041
Thompson House
Prairie School Style
1916-1917
Grand Island





HL06-042

Reimers, John House
American Foursquare
Influence
ca. 1910
Grand Island

HL06-049
Hamilton-Donald
House
Neo-Classical
Revival Style
1905
Grand Island
NRHP- March 13, 1986



HL06-052

Bartenbach, Henry J.
House
Art Moderne
1893, remodeled
1937-1938
Grand Island
NRHP- December 8,
1986

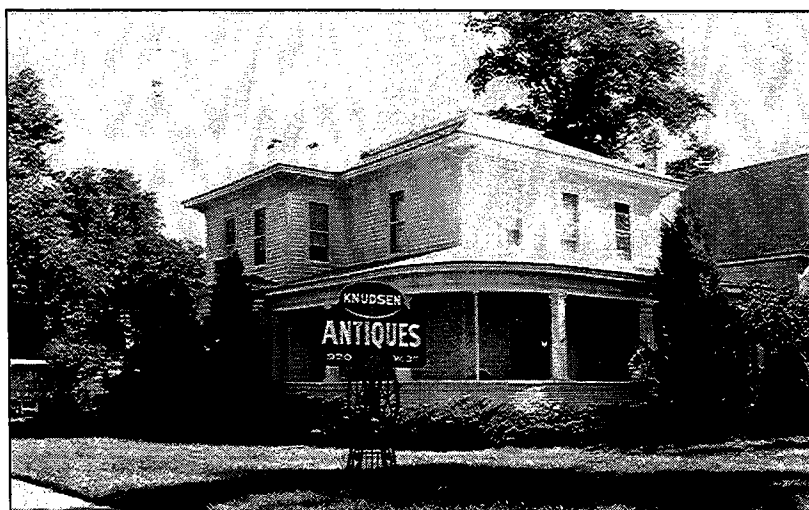
HL06-059

Roeser, Oscar House
2-Story Cube
1908
Grand Island
NRHP - June 25, 1982



HL06-065

House
Italianate Style
Influence
ca. 1890
Grand Island



HL06-076

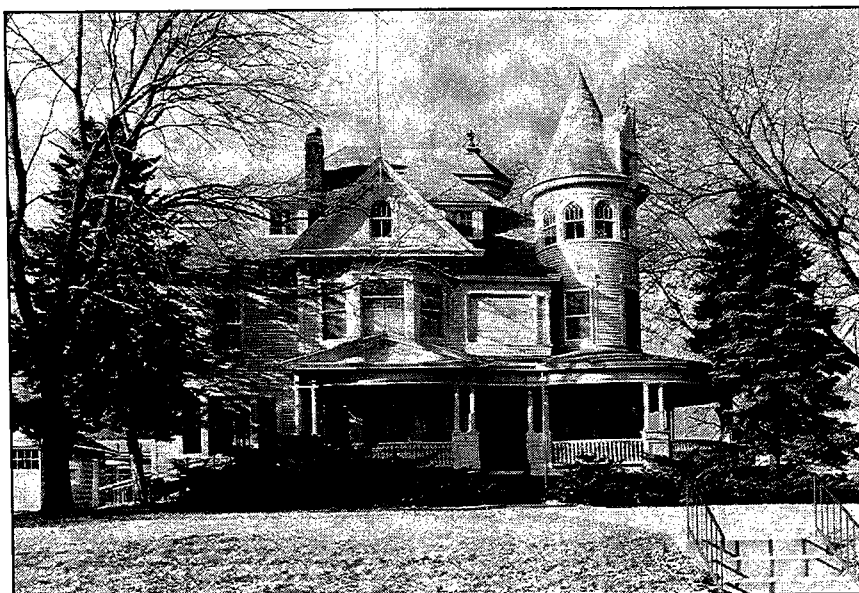
Glade-Donald House
Shingle Style
ca. 1905
Grand Island
NRHP - March 13, 1986





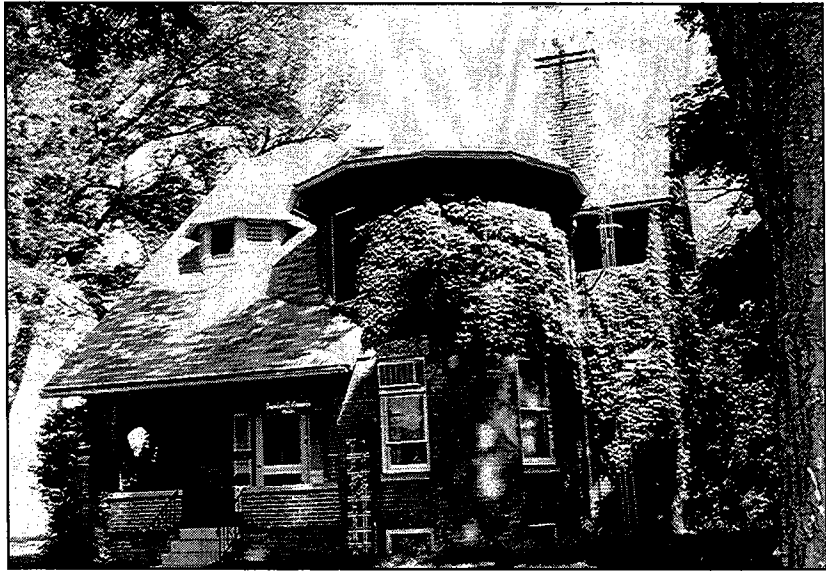
HL06-077
House
Tudor Revival Style
ca. 1940
Grand Island

HL06-085
Hanna, James House
American Foursquare
Style
ca. 1925
Grand Island



HL06-087
Hargis, Andrew
House
Queen Anne Style
1898
Grand Island

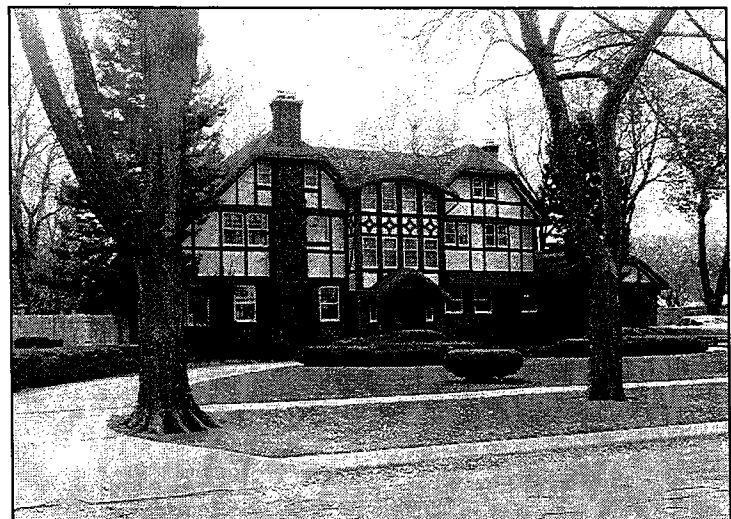
HL06-08
Kirsche, Otto House
Queen Anne/Shingle
Style
ca. 190
Grand Island

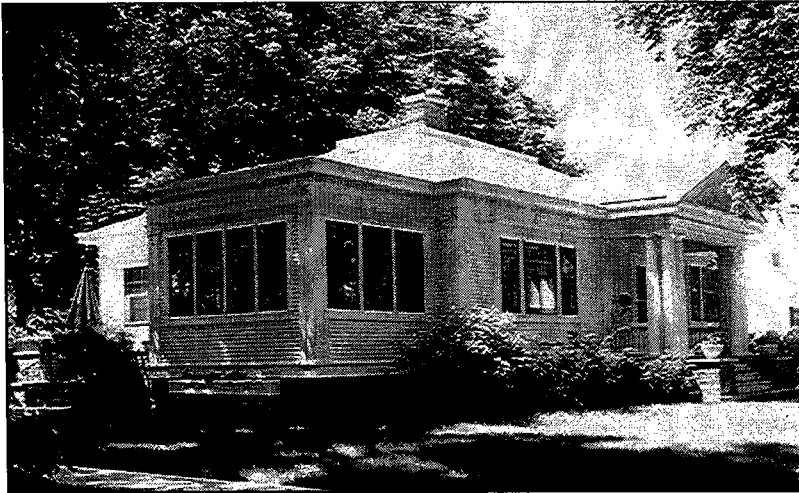


HL06-091
House
American
Foursquare Style
ca. 1920
Grand Island



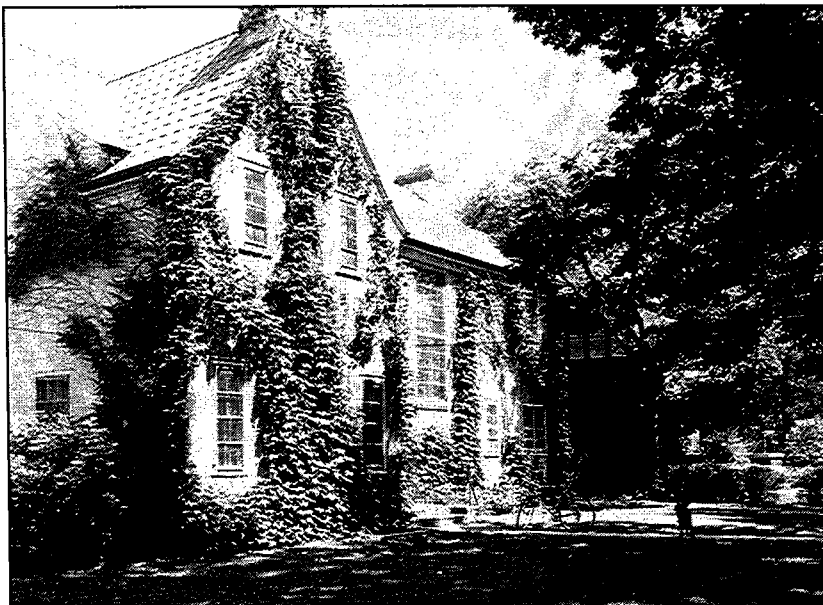
HL06-106
Augustine, Ernest House
Tudor Revival Style
ca. 1940
Grand Island





HL06-110
Schuster, Arthur House
Georgian Revival Style
1916
Grand Island

HL06-111
Farnsworth, Dr. Earle
House
Tudor Revival Style
ca. 1914-1915
Grand Island



HL06-112
Mathias, Ley House
Colonial Revival
Style Influence
ca. 1903
Grand Island

HL06-120
Loucks, Wm. House
Japanese Revival Style
ca. 1934
Grand Island



HL06-124
Scheffel House
Side Gable
ca. 1890
Grand Island

HL06-163
Platt, William House
Side Gable
ca. 1900
Grand Island





HL06-166
Huff, Lee
Apartment Building
20th Century
Vernacular
ca. 1935
Grand Island
NRHP - July 1994

HL06-263
House
Tudor Revival Style
ca. 1925
Grand Island



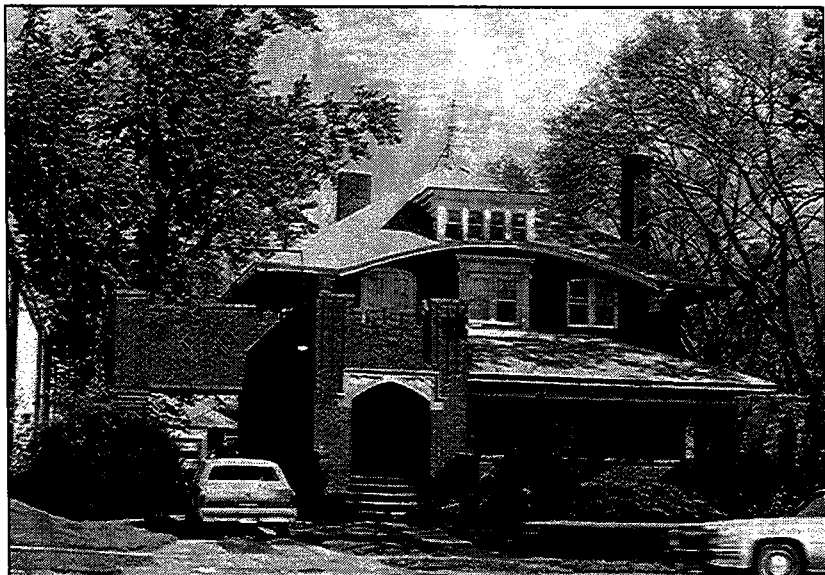
HL06-388
House
Prairie School Style
ca. 1920
Grand Island

HL06-450
Apartment
20th Century
Vernacular
ca. 1920
Grand Island



HL06-530
Apartment
Chicago Style
ca. 1920
Grand Island

HL06-551
House
American Foursquare
Style w/Eclectic
Influence
ca. 1920
Grand Island





HL08-016
House
Gable Ell
ca. 1890
Wood River

HL08-022
House
Late Queen Anne
Style
ca. 1910
Wood River



HL08-041
House
Colonial Revival
Style Influence
ca. 1940
Wood River

VI

Recommendations

- Potential Multiple Property Listing for rural resources (ie. farmsteads and schools) in Hall County
- Oral history project regarding Resettlement Administration Farmstead programs
- Oral history project regarding Lincoln Highway
- Statewide Multiple Property Listing of Resettlement Administration
- Statewide Multiple Property Listing for Lincoln Highway
- Statewide Multiple Property Listing for Lustron Houses
- Re-evaluate potential National Register of Historic Places residential district in Grand Island. Boundaries include Charles Street from Logan Street to Grant Street and the southside of Koenig Street between Grant Street and Harrison Street.
- Potential National Register of Historic Places duplexes district in Grand Island between Cleveland, West Second, West First, and Arthur streets.
- Conduct an Historic American Building Survey (HABS) of the Cornhusker Ordnance Plant
- List National Register eligible properties identified in this report
- Transfer all survey site information onto archivally stable maps

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Eaves – The edge of a roof that extends beyond the wall surface.

Eclectic Style 1890-1910 – An eclectic building displays a combination of architectural elements from various types. It usually resulted when a house designed in one architectural style was remodeled.

Elevation – Any single side of a building or structure.

Eligible – Properties that meet the National Park Service criteria for nomination and listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Facade – The main elevation of a building.

Fenestration – The arrangement of openings, for example windows and doors, on an elevation.

Foundation – The support of a building, which is exposed near ground level.

Front Gable – The triangular end of the roof faces the street.

Gable End – The triangular end of an exterior wall.

Gable Roof – A roof type formed by the meeting of two sloping roof surfaces.

Georgian Revival Style 1900-1930 – An architectural style characterized by symmetry of floor plan and facade, usually with gable roof with a central chimney. Other common features include doors flanked by columns or pilasters with a decorative pediment and six to twelve pane windows.

Hipped Roof – A roof type formed by the meeting of four sloping roof surfaces.

Italianate Style 1870-1890 – A popular style for houses, these square, rectangular, or L-shaped two-story buildings have low-pitched hip roofs, with wide eaves usually supported by heavy brackets, tall narrow windows, and front porches. In some cases, the roof may be topped with a cupola.

Late Gothic Revival 1880-1920 – A later version of the Gothic style, these buildings are generally larger and use heavy masonry construction. In churches, masonry is sometimes used throughout the structure. The pointed-arch window opening remains a key feature, however designs are more subdued than those of the earlier period.

Lintel – A horizontal member located at the top of a window, door or other opening.

Mansard Roof – A roof having two slopes on all four sides, and a flat top.

Modernistic Style 1930-1940 – Art Deco, the earlier Modernistic phase, was used primarily for public and commercial buildings and is characterized by angular composition, with towers and vertical projections and smooth wall surfaces with stylized and geometric motifs, including zigzags and chevrons. Art Moderne, the later version, shows smooth wall finishes without surface ornamentation, asymmetrical facades with a horizontal emphasis, flat roofs, rounded corners, and bands of windows or curved window glass creating a streamlined effect.

Neo-Classical Style 1900-1920 – An architectural style characterized by a symmetrical facade and usually includes a pediment portico with classical columns.

Noncontributing – A building, site, or object that does not add to the historic architectural qualities or historic associations for which a property is significant. The resource was not present during the period of significance; does not relate to the documented significance of the property; or due to alterations, disturbances, additions, or other changes, it no longer possesses historic integrity or is capable of yielding important information about the period.

Parapet – A low wall located on the edge of a roof, may be stepped in form.

Pediment – A decorative triangular element found at the gable of the roof, or above an entryway.

Period Revival Style 1920-1930 – Influenced by the styles of medieval English and French country cottages, these houses are usually of two stories and display irregular massing, steeply pitched roofs with slate or clay tile covering, massive chimneys, half-timbering, casement windows, and attached garages.

Pilasters – A rectangular column attached to a wall that is used for decorative purposes.

Prairie School Style 1900-1930 – This movement, popularized by the world renowned architect Frank Lloyd Wright, emphasized the integration of a building and its site. Elements of the style include a low-pitch roof line with wide over-hanging eaves, two stories high with one-story porch, and an overall horizontal emphasis in the design.

Property Type – A classification for a building, structure, site, or object based on its historic use or function.

